

ST. JOHN'S PHENOM FELIPE LOPEZ • BASEBALL PREVIEW

# COLLEGE SPORTS

*With a month left in the season, which teams will rise to the occasion?*

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# COLLEGE SPORTS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF COLLEGE SPORTS

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As the basketball season enters the stretch run, which teams have the inside shot at an NCAA Tournament berth? CS delivers a conference-by-conference look at the favorites, sleepers and players to watch.

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## COUNTDOWN TO ATLANTA

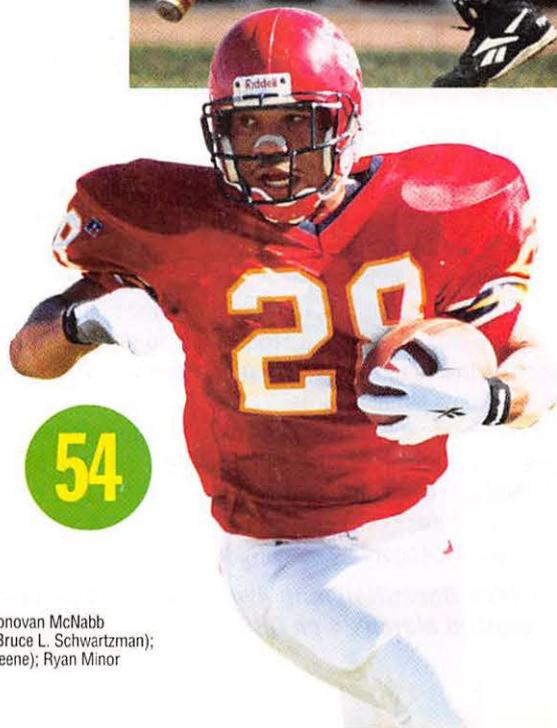
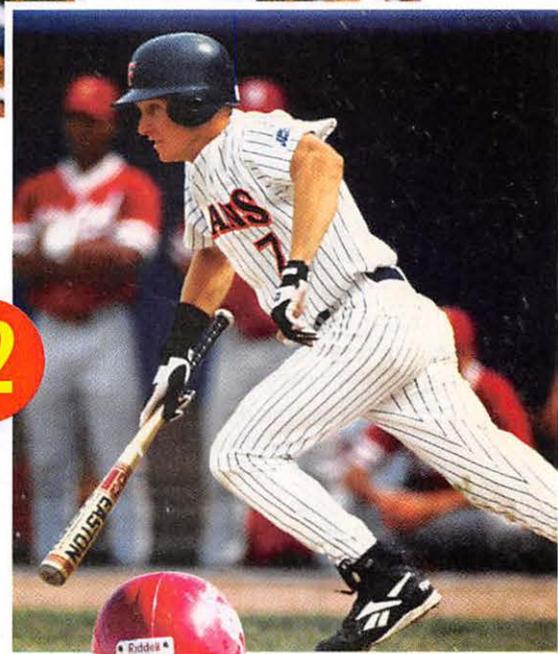
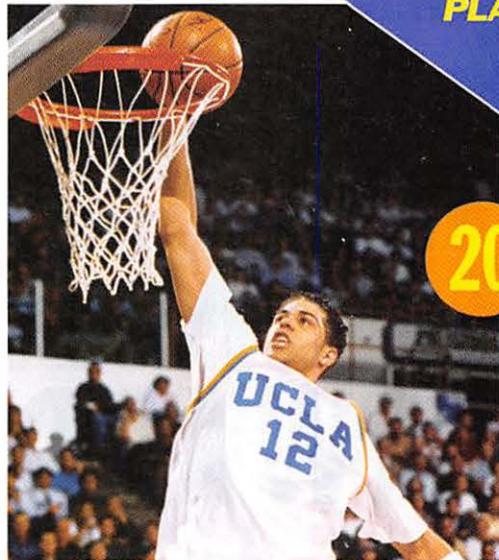
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# THE 1996 BOOST/ NAISMITH AWARDS



Maryland sophomore Joe Smith (left) earned top honors before leaving for the pros, while UConn's Rebecca Lobo (below) capped her perfect season in style.



COURTESY ATLANTA TIPOFF CLUB (2)

Each year, the Atlanta Tipoff Club crowns the top male and female college basketball player with its postseason award. The Boost/Naismith Player of the Year awards, under new sponsorship, are given in memory of Dr. James Naismith, the inventor of the game of basketball. Last year's winners were Maryland's Joe Smith and Connecticut's Rebecca Lobo. Smith led the Terps to the Sweet 16 while Lobo helped the Huskies to a perfect, undefeated championship season.

Founded 27 years ago, the Atlanta Tipoff Club is dedicated to recognizing the achievements of student-athletes in basketball.

UCLA's Lew Alcindor, who later changed his name to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, was the award's first recipient in 1969. UCLA's Bill Walton (1972-'74) and Virginia's Ralph Sampson (1981-'83) are the only three-time male winners of the award. Others who have been honored include North Carolina's Michael Jordan, Georgetown's Patrick Ewing, Duke's Christian Laettner and Indiana State's Larry Bird.

In 1983, the Atlanta Tipoff Club expanded the awards to recognize women's basketball. Old Dominion's Anne Donovan was the first to be honored with the award, which has also named such stars as USC's Cheryl Miller (the only three-time women's winner, 1984-'86), Virginia's Dawn Staley and Texas' Clarissa Davis.

In recent years, the awards program has been expanded to honor a broader range of people who have contributed to the game of basketball. The Boost/Naismith Outstanding Contribution Award honors an individual for his/her work supporting the game. Veteran sportscaster Curt Gowdy was the first to receive the award in 1992. In the late 1980s, the Atlanta Tipoff Club added the College Coach of the Year, Prep Player of the Year and Officials of the Year to its list of awards.

A voting panel consisting of coaches, conference commissioners, former winners and members of the media elected a preliminary, non-binding list of Player of the Year candidates (see box), and will announce five finalists in each category by early March.

**The 1996 Boost/Naismith Awards winners will be announced March 24 on CBS.**

## 1996 BOOST/NAISMITH AWARDS CANDIDATES

### MEN

#### TOP 10

Tim Duncan, C, Jr., Wake Forest  
Kerry Kittles, G, Sr., Villanova  
Marcus Camby, C, Jr., UMass  
Ray Allen, G, Jr., UConn  
Jacque Vaughn, G, Sr., Kansas  
Allen Iverson, G, So., Georgetown  
Charles O'Bannon, F, Jr., UCLA  
Lorenzen Wright, C, So., Memphis  
Ryan Minor, F/G, Sr., Oklahoma  
Tony Delk, G, Sr., Kentucky

#### BEST of the REST

Erick Dampier, C, Jr., Miss. State  
John Wallace, F, Sr., Syracuse  
Othella Harrington, C/F, Sr., Georgetown  
Toby Bailey, G, So., UCLA  
Samaki Walker, F/C, So., Louisville  
Felipe Lopez, G, So., St. John's  
Keith Van Horn, F, Jr., Utah  
Jerald Honeycutt, F, Jr., Tulane  
Brevin Knight, G, Jr., Stanford  
Kiwane Garriss, F, Jr., Illinois

### WOMEN

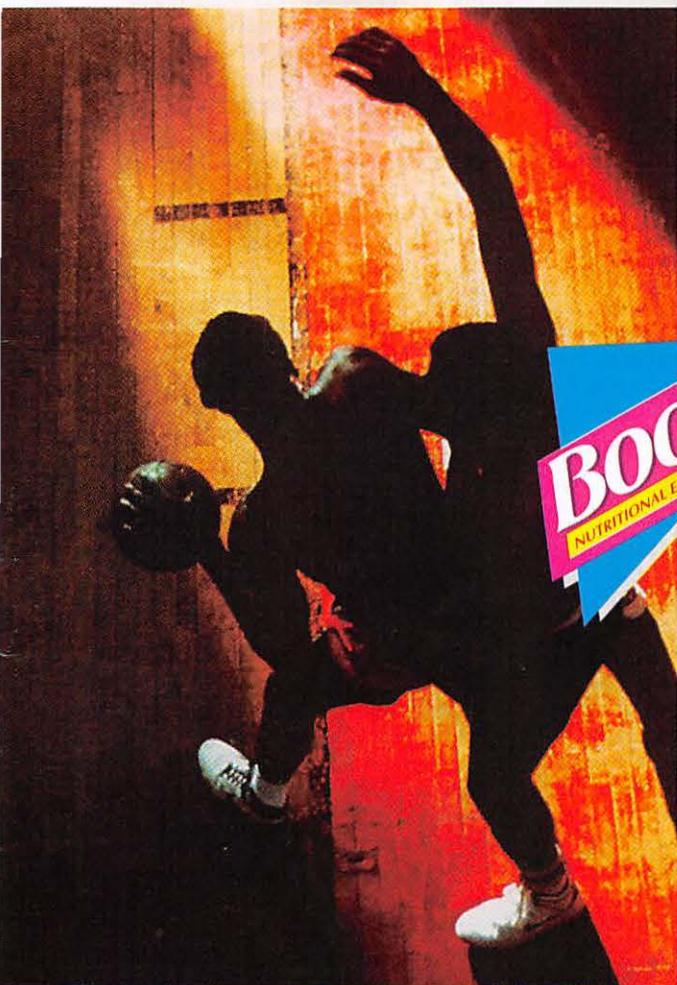
#### TOP 10

Kara Wolters, C, Jr., UConn  
Katie Smith, G, Sr., Ohio State  
Wendy Palmer, F, Sr., Virginia  
Jennifer Rizzotti, G, Sr., UConn  
La'Keshia Frett, F, Jr., Georgia  
Vickie Johnson, G, Sr., Louisiana Tech  
Michelle Marciniak, G, Sr., Tennessee  
Saudia Roundtree, G, Sr., Georgia  
Stacey Lovelace, F, Sr., Purdue  
Charisse Sampson, G, Sr., Kansas  
Shannon Johnson, G, Sr., South Carolina

#### BEST of the REST

Latasha Byears, F, Sr., DePaul  
Tina Thompson, F, Jr., USC  
Tina Nicholson, G, Sr., Penn State  
Nykesha Sales, F, So., UConn  
Sheri Sam, F, Sr., Vanderbilt  
Angie Potthoff, F, Jr., Penn State  
Kate Starbird, F, Jr., Stanford  
Tracy Henderson, C, Jr., Georgia  
Stephanie White, G, Fr., Purdue  
Debra Williams, G, Sr., Louisiana Tech

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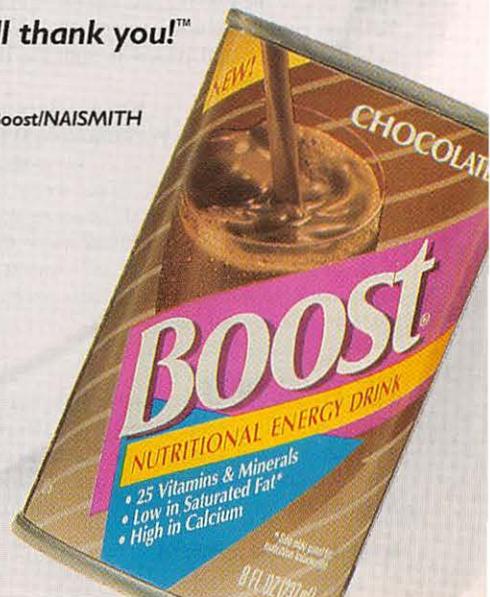
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# FANS' Forum

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Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889.  
E-Mail address: fansforum@aol.com  
(Please include your hometown and state)

## CATCH THE WAHOOS

■ After receiving your December issue with the college basketball preview, I was disturbed that Virginia's men's basketball team was nowhere to be found in the preseason rankings. How could a team with the best backcourt in the nation be ignored? Your writers didn't even consider them on the bubble, yet you managed to find a place for Indiana which lacks depth, an on-court leader and a bonafide star.

Another ranking I have a problem with is the Iowa Hawkeyes, who were ranked in the lower portion of the Top 25. This team has a great player in Jess Settles and a gunner in Chris Kingsbury, yet they were ranked below many teams that you overrated (Arkansas, Stanford, Tulane and Virginia Tech).

I guess time will tell.

KEVIN PALMER  
ALBANY, N.Y.  
VIA E-MAIL

## GET ON TRACK

■ I run track for Howard University and I think that sports such as track should get more than just one page for each division and should get in your magazine more than once a year.

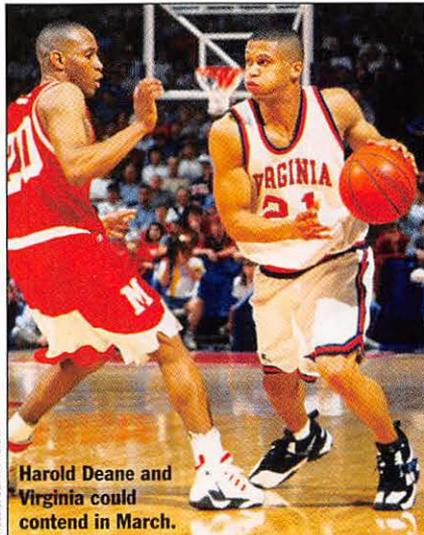
You put football and basketball in your magazine all year, which is understandable since they're the two biggest college sports. Yet, you could take a few pages away from those sports or add pages to include the other college sports.

KENRIC BROOKS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
VIA E-MAIL

*In response to interests like yours, we've redesigned our Division Digests (starting with this issue) specifically to provide more stories and information on all sports—especially the non-revenue sports such as track and field.—Ed.*

## THE FINAL NOTE

■ Regarding the recent letters from Messrs. Yutzy and Simon, Notre Dame seems to deserve your preseason ranking since the Irish finished the regular season 9-2 with their



Harold Deane and Virginia could contend in March.

only losses to Top-10 teams Ohio State and Northwestern (by two points). In schedule rankings, one using opponents' records rated Notre Dame's third in the country while another using power rankings rated it second.

TOM ERTL  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

*The moral of this on-going debate? Wait until after the season is over before reacting to preseason rankings.—Ed.*

## INJUSTICE

■ I am writing to you about your college basketball Top 25 ratings in your December issue. Your picks were good overall but they had some serious flaws. First of all, Villanova is not the No. 2 team in the country. After all, they lost in the first round of last year's tourney to Old Dominion. They aren't even the best team in the Big East, no matter how good Kerry Kittles is. Georgetown with Allen Iverson and Othella Harrington and a solid defensive team is better.

Once again, you underrated UMass, which should have been a Top 5 team, as it proved in its win over then-No.1 Kentucky. Marcus Camby is arguably the best big man in the nation. The other big man who you could call the best is Wake Forest's Tim Duncan. Wake Forest deserved at least a Top 15 bid because it could win the ACC, as could another great team you overlooked—Virginia. Virginia has arguably the best backcourt in the nation with the awesome combination of Harold Deane and Curtis Staples.

These teams are better than Georgia, Indiana and Virginia Tech. Your Top 7 should have been: Kentucky, Kansas, Georgetown, UMass, UConn, Villanova, Maryland.

RYAN POPE  
SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

## DESERTED IN THE DESERT

■ Like most magazines and newspapers on the East Coast, CS continues to look past the continual dominance of the Arizona Wild-

## From the EDITOR

For those of us dreaming of perfection in college hoops, forget about it. A perfect pass, sure. A perfect season? Not likely.

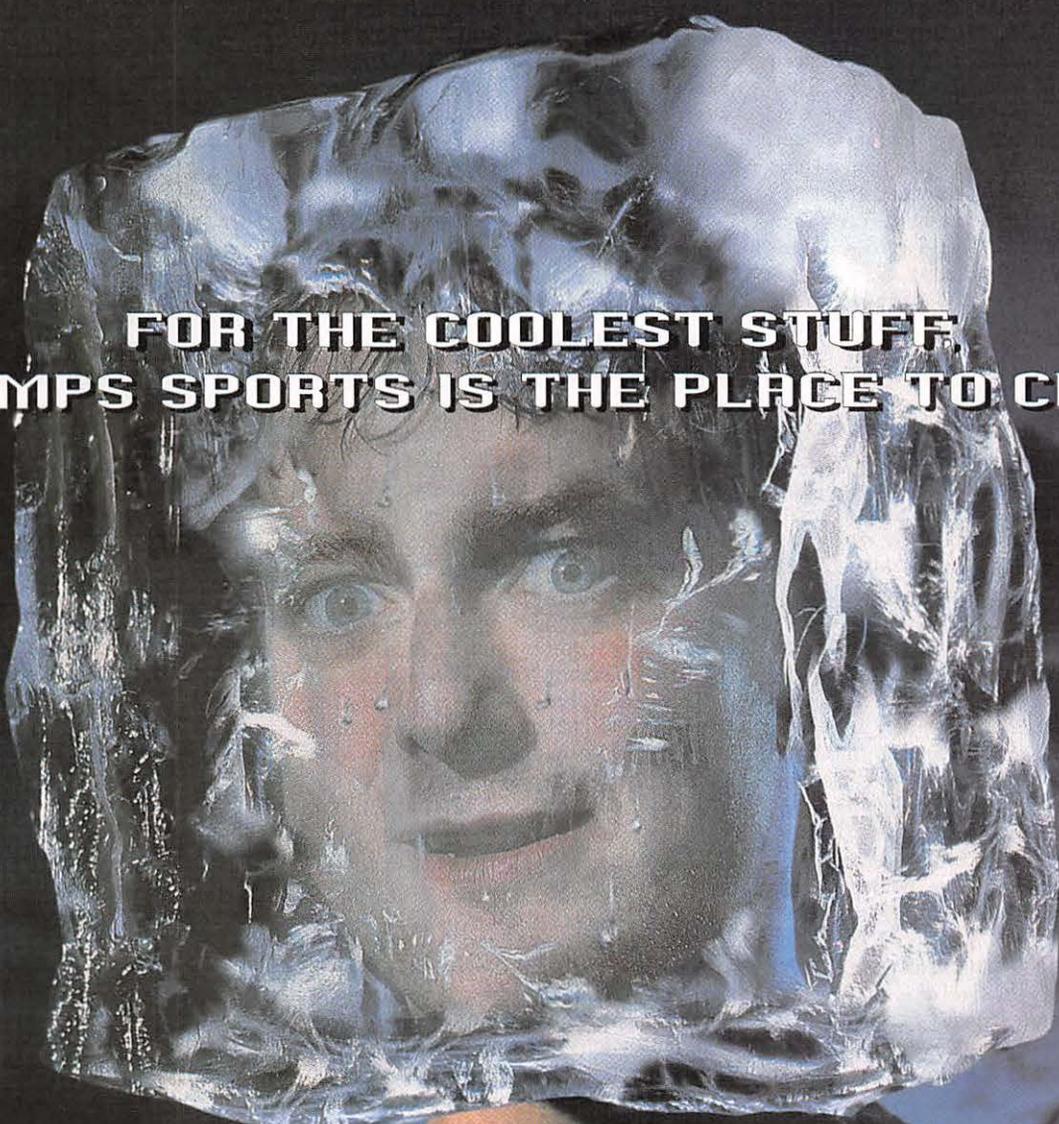
It's been 20 years since a team went undefeated to win the national championship. Indiana, led by Scott May and Kent Benson, went 32-0 and defeated Michigan, 86-68, to cap a perfect season. Since then, no national champion has had fewer than two losses, which has occurred three times. Consider the obstacles to an undefeated season: Made-for-TV early non-conference battles, league rivalries, a conference postseason tournament (for most) and the NCAA Tournament. Don't forget that many of the best players from the preceding year leave early, too.

As exciting as they are to watch, the early made-for-TV events, such as the Great Eight, make it difficult for top-ranked teams to make it to January unbeaten. Just ask Kentucky. But while those who feel that playing the early big-dollar games is a '90s trend, consider the fact that the '76 Hoosiers opened against defending-national champ UCLA, then played Florida State, Notre Dame and Kentucky in order. Their road to the title featured its share of bumps: They twice won in overtime during the regular season and, in the final, trailed by six at half-time before rallying to win. If you thought '76 was amazing, just consider what might have been had Scott May been healthy the year before when an undefeated Indiana lost to Kentucky, 92-90, in the Midwest Regional Final.

Thanks to shrewd scheduling and TV dollars, those feats likely will not be repeated, at least not by a major conference team. It's possible a team such as Miami (Ohio) from the MAC could challenge (see page 34), thanks to relatively soft conference games and a less-ambitious non-league schedule. This year, for instance, the favored Redskins don't play any preseason Top 25 foes. Either way, it'll take a miracle for any team to go undefeated in years to come.

**NEW LOOK:** Regular readers of CS will notice some design changes in this issue. Perhaps the most important one, however, is the editorial approach to our Division Digests. Fans of the various levels now will be able to find news and stories about their favorite sports year-round. We will, of course, continue to deliver our exclusive preseason rankings of every sport.

  
Norb Garrett  
Editor



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## Fans' Forum

cats in basketball. Year in and year out, they are always ranked in the Top 10 and given a No. 1 or 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament. Yes, they have lost in the first round three of four years, but how many teams have been to the Final Four in the last four years? They have. Also, how many teams have won their conference eight of the last 10 years? Again, they have. I am not saying they are a Duke or Kentucky, but they are not far behind.

By the way, they did win the preseason NIT quite convincingly, just ask Georgetown, Michigan and Arkansas.

MATT PIORKOWSKI  
TUCSON, ARIZ.

## KING COMMODORE

■ In reference to your '95-'96 Basketball Player Ratings (November 1995), how could you have missed such an obvious choice as Vanderbilt's Frank Seckar among the Top 30 point guards? I'd say it was pretty apparent that nobody talked to the SEC coaches, especially since Jeff Shepard made the list on little merit of his own. Even Capel and Hurley seem to have made it simply because of their schools.

Did you check Seckar's stats at all? He was among the league leaders in steals, three-point field-goal percentage and three-pointers made per game. He was also the second-leading scorer on his team and already owns the school's steals record. I may be a Vandy fan, and we have our share of less desirable sports teams, but men's basketball has a relatively successful tradition.

J.T. CALLIS

HENDERSONVILLE, TENN.

*There's no doubt that Seckar is an outstanding all-around talent and is attacking his senior year with a vengeance. For more on Seckar, see page 19.—Ed.*

## MULLIN WAS THE MAN

■ Your December issue entitled "Year of the 'Cats" was outstanding. It's great to see one of the best conferences in the na-

tion, the Big East, getting its due.

But I think the comparison between Felipe Lopez and Chris Mullin was far-fetched because Mullin had natural ability and played against better competition than what Felipe is facing today. Granted, both players were on their national teams, but Mullin won two Olympic gold medals (one while an undergrad at St. John's, the other while at Golden State).

NESTOR MORELLI  
NEW YORK, N.Y.  
VIA E-MAIL

## LONGEST YARD II

■ Regarding the "Longest Yard II" item in the Jan. 1996 issue, Riley Washington, a third-string wide receiver at Nebraska, is hardly a prominent player. Just a minor point: Washington has been charged with attempted second-degree murder. Two "reputable" individuals have come forth as witnesses against Washington. Between the two they have more than 100 arrests on their police files, a number of convictions for providing false information to police and a history of harassing Nebraska athletes.

This case will never make it to trial. Get your facts straight before trashing someone. Washington has not been charged, or convicted, of second-degree murder.

RANDEE FALTER  
NORFOLK, NEB.

*Please note the clarification below.—Ed.*

## MORE WOMEN'S HOOPS

■ Although I realize it is impossible to give every sport enough coverage, I was particularly disappointed by the lack of information regarding Division I women's basketball. How can you justify a combined four pages devoted to Division I women's basketball in your November and December preview issues? Essentially, you would have been more accurate by entitling both issues "Men's Basketball Preview."

It is unfortunate that your magazine has chosen to follow the well-traveled road of overexposure and hype given to men's basketball. I hope that you rethink your priorities in future issues and give women's basketball the respect it has earned and deserves.

KENNETH INGRAM  
LOUISVILLE, KY.

*Achieving that perfect balance is never easy, but we're working on it. For example, turn to our exclusive women's basketball skills ratings, pages 48-50.—Ed.*

## CLARIFICATION

In "The Longest Yard II" item in "Inside Report" (January 1996), the listed offenses were allegations, not convictions. Regarding Riley Washington, the allegation should have read: attempted second-degree murder. While all of the entries on the list were confirmed, CS regrets the error.

# COLLEGE SPORTS

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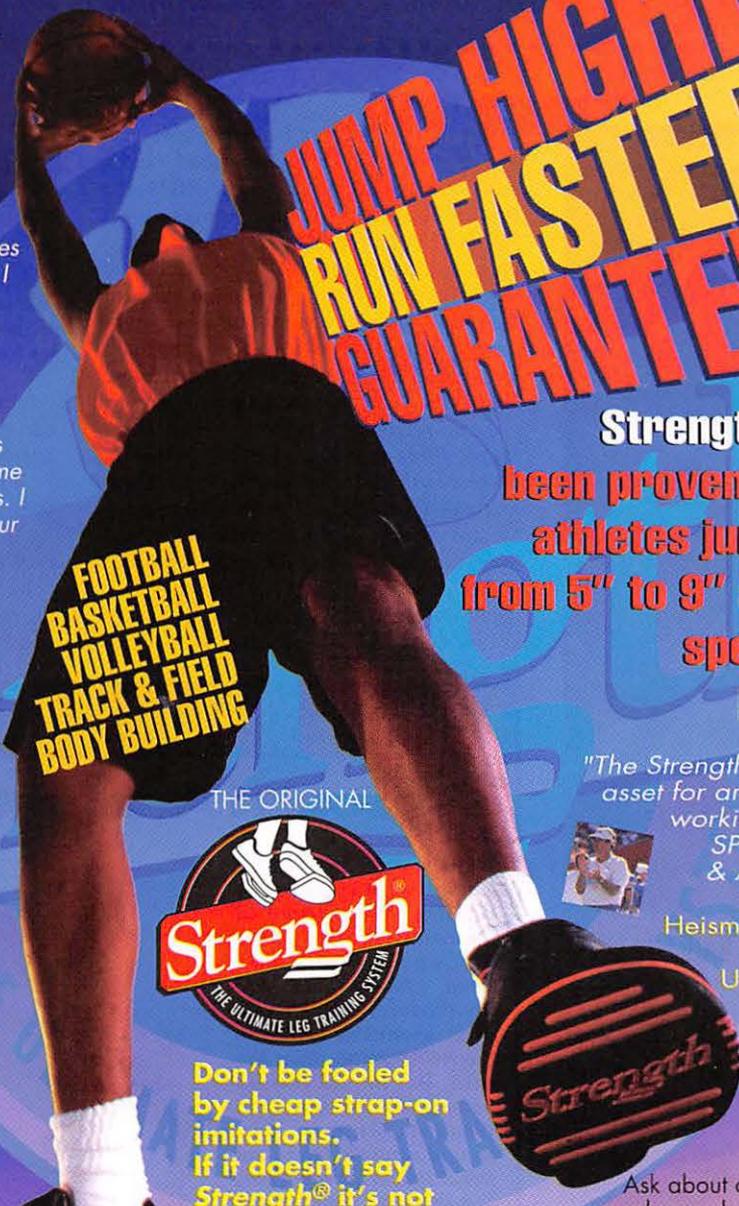
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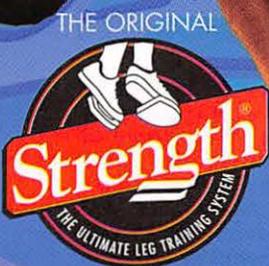
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# INSIDE REPORT

By **DAVID SEIGERMAN**



Tony Delk and Kentucky have given 'Cats fans plenty to cheer about.

charge into the future of basketball coverage.

The 1995-'96 Duke basketball media guide has been released on CD-ROM, the first of its kind. The pioneering project features all the requisite statistics, biographies and history found in the traditional magazine-style literature. But the guide of the future contains full-motion video highlights, video interviews with the nine players to have had their jerseys retired and a breakthrough in multi-media technology.

Ezra Kucharz, Chuck Lee and Dave Stepp, three graduate students in a joint Duke-North Carolina program, synchronized 17 video cameras positioned in a circle around one of the baskets and filmed every member of the Duke roster in various stages of scoring. They shot the entire sequence of Ricky Price and Jeff Capel in the act of dunking. The result was a three-



Accustomed to the media spotlight, Duke players are now available in a multi-media format.

dimensional image of every player, which can be viewed on the CD-ROM from 360 degrees—even the dunks.

It was the first time the process has ever been done with live subjects.

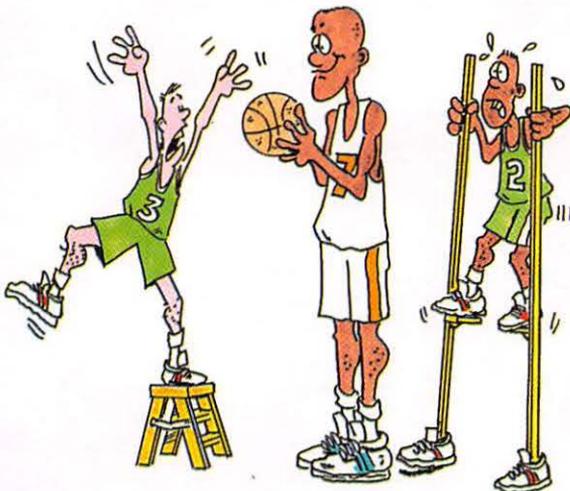
"We applied technology in a way nobody ever thought of," said Kucharz, who conceived the concept while playing basketball during one of his regular games with Lee and Stepp. "We told our Apple rep what we

## COLLEGE SPORTS SURVEY

### WOODEN AWARD CANDIDATES

**THEY ARE THE BEST basketball players in the country. Sure, some of the names on this year's list would likely have been absent had Joe Smith, Jerry Stackhouse et al. spent this winter in the NCAA rather than the NBA. But the 25 players nominated for the John Wooden Award, presented annually to the national Player of the Year, are in most cases head and shoulders above their peers.**

**We spoke to 15 of the 25 candidates and found, among other things, that Ed O'Bannon and Grant Hill must have been pretty good college players—they were the only guys mentioned more than once when the survey asked for each player's all-time toughest opponent. Here are the rest of the results:**



**1** If you could play for any other coach in the country, who would it be?  
Mike Krzyzewski, Duke . . . . . 6 votes

Dean Smith, UNC . . . . . 2  
Roy Williams, Kansas . . . . . 2  
5 others . . . . . 1

**2** Have you ever considered leaving college early for the pros?  
YES 40% . . . . . NO 60%

**3** If you could beat any team in the country, which would it be?  
Kansas . . . . . 4 votes  
Kentucky . . . . . 3

No preference . . . . . 2  
6 others . . . . . 1

**4** Are you on pace to graduate in four years?  
YES 87% . . . . . NO 13%

**5** Have you ever been contacted by an agent?  
YES 13% . . . . . NO 87%

**6** Should college athletes be paid?  
YES 93% . . . . . NO 7%

### WHAT NEXT? GOOD BAGELS?

It used to be the only New York-style treat you'd find in Lexington, Ky., was cheesecake. During the Rick Pitino Era at Kentucky, though, more and more Big Apple influence has crept into the Bluegrass culture. The most recent evidence is an increasingly popular chant at Wildcats games: "C-A-T-S, Cats! Cats! Cats!" It's a direct descendant of the infamous "J-E-T-S, Jets! Jets! Jets!" chorus that echoes throughout an oft-empty Meadowlands each fall.

It might appear inappropriate for 'Cats fans to emulate their Jets counterparts. After all, the Wildcats had more wins in their first six games than the Jets had all season, and there's likely a postseason appearance in the Meadowlands in Kentucky's immediate future.

But there is one striking similarity—both team's respective offenses revolve primarily around the three-point field goal.

### LIGHTS . . . CAMERON . . . ACTION

They spent the early 1990s beating practically everyone they faced. Now, the Duke Blue Devils are back to their frontrunning ways, though not necessarily on the basketball court. This time, Duke is leading the

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Many major NCAA teams available.

#### JERSEYS

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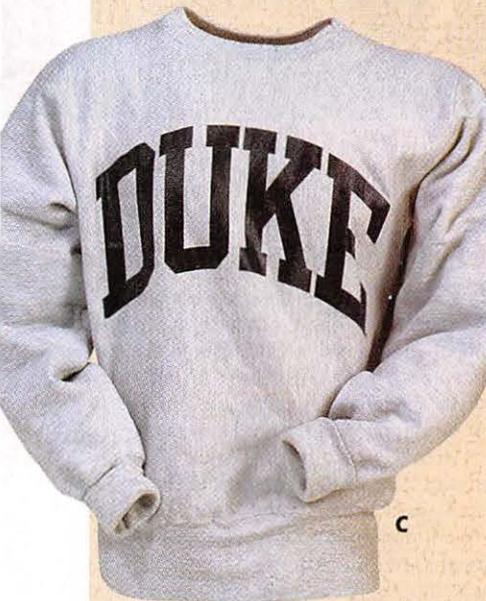
#### SHORTS

Adult sizes: S(28-30), M(32-34), L(36-38), XL(40-42) .....\$39.99

Item# CRS



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# INSIDE REPORT

**Tommie Frazier's  
NFL role model could  
be Kordell Stewart.**

planned, but he was skeptical we could pull off something like this. The guy came here to see the set-up and, I don't want to say his jaw hit the floor, but we made him a believer."

Kucharz, Lee and Stepp have since formed Applied New Technologies and have been approached about compiling a guide for several major programs. Apparently, their virtual reality experiment is about to become actual reality.

## ■ CAN'T PASS IT UP

The fact that the Big Eight's most versatile quarterbacks historically have not panned out in the NFL is not what's standing in Tommie Frazier's way. Rather, the Nebraska senior's biggest obstacle is the most recent Big Eight quarterback to make it.

Colorado alum Kordell Stewart wanted to play quarterback in the NFL. But rather than sit on the bench and wait for some horrible misfortune to befall Pittsburgh Steelers starter Neil O'Donnell, Stewart flourished in a custom-made schizophrenic role and has emerged as one of the league's more exciting players. Stewart has become known and feared as "Slash," as in quarterback/receiver. He's both thrown and caught touchdown passes for the Steelers during his rookie season and has even run the option on occasion.

Stewart's adaptability—and the willingness of others to switch positions, such as former Rice quarterback Bert Emanuel, now an Atlanta Falcons receiver—may open the door for players like Frazier, guys who may have the athletic ability to play in the NFL but not necessarily the specific skills of a quarterback. "If a team drafts me as a quarterback, I'll go out and play quarterback," said Frazier, who finished second in the Heisman Trophy race. "If they want me to change positions, I'm going to think about it. If it's what I really want to do—play in the NFL—then I'm going to change my position and do what I can to have the opportunity to make a team."

Frazier's talent is unquestionable. He rushed for nearly 2,000 yards in his college career, passed for 3,500 more, accounted for 79 touchdowns (43 passing, 36 rushing) and led the Huskers to three consecutive national championship games. "I don't know if anybody in the country asks the things of their quarterback that we do," Nebraska quarterbacks coach Turner Gill said. "It has to be a very, very talented individual to do all those things. Tommie Frazier is the prototype we're looking for."

Still, there is bound to be skepticism in NFL circles. Frazier's size (6-foot-2, 212 pounds) is slightly below the NFL average at quarterback (6-3, 217); he's listed at exactly the same size as St. Louis' Chris Miller—the poster boy for the beatings a pro quarterback endures. And most teams would be more comfortable investing in a player whose best passing day was somewhat flashier than the 14-for-23, 241-yard performance Frazier had against Colorado in October. NFL scouts are looking for evidence of passers who can pass—they're funny that way.

"I think if I get the opportunity, I'll be able to prove to a lot of people that I can play



GENE HUBBARD

quarterback in the NFL," Frazier said. "I'm just going to have to first get that chance."

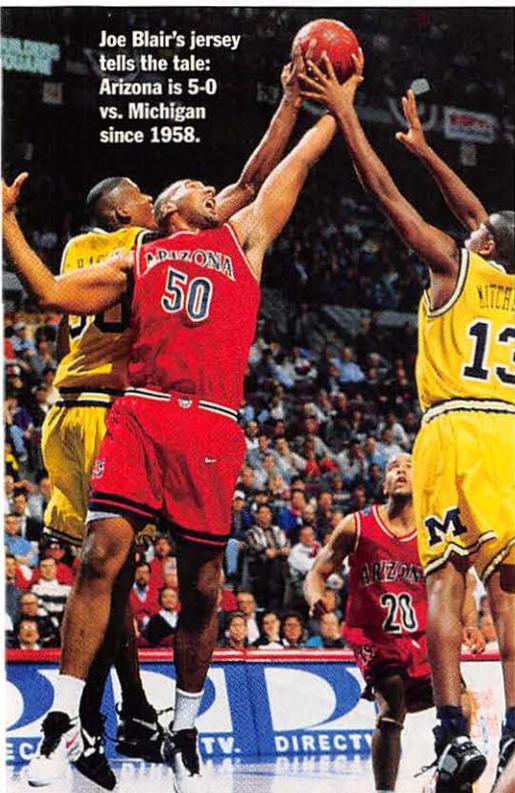
## ■ HURTS SO GOOD

His quickness recalls the irrepressible Tiny Archibald. His fluid penetrability elicits comparisons to Jason Kidd. Talk to Georgetown coach John Thompson about Allen Iverson's toughness, though, and you'd probably be surprised by the head Hoya's answer.

"Allen reminds me of Patrick," Thompson said. Say what? Iverson and Ewing? A 6-foot guard as tough as a 7-foot center?

Well, that might not be much of a compliment after all. After leaving the Knicks for Kentucky, Rick Pitino once commented on Ewing's surprisingly low pain threshold, a trait apparently Iverson shares with the most dominant big man in Big East history.

"They react to pain the same way," Thompson said. "You hit him, he'll say,



Joe Blair's jersey tells the tale: Arizona is 5-0 vs. Michigan since 1958.

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

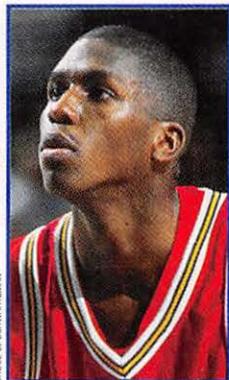
## COLLEGE SPORTS LIST

**ARIZ-OWN'YA** Arizona may not be the intimidating team of recent years, but don't blame Michigan fans for feeling a little queasy if the Wildcats show up opposite the Wolverines in the NCAA Tournament. The last five times the two teams have faced each other since their first meeting during the 1957-'58 season (which Michigan won, 88-76), have been in tournaments—and Arizona has won every time.

SEASON	TOURNAMENT	FINAL SCORE	KEY STAT
'87-'88	Great Alaska Shootout	Arizona, 79-64	Tourney win vaulted Arizona into Top 10, en route to school's first No. 1 ranking.
'89-'90	Hall of Fame Tipoff	Arizona, 82-75	'Cats led by Sean Rooks' 20 points and Jud Buechler's double-double.
'93-'94	Valley Bank Fiesta Classic	Arizona, 119-95	Khalid Reeves had 40 points on 13-for-14 shooting.
'94-'95	Great Eight	Arizona, 78-57	Damon Stoudamire outscored Michigan's starting backcourt, 24-16.
'95-'96	Preseason NIT	Arizona, 86-79	Ben Davis (17 points, 12 rebounds) led the unranked 'Cats back into the Top 25.

## QUOTE of the MONTH

**"If he hadn't received all the notoriety or had all the expectations put on him, you would have been saying, 'Did you hear about that freshman at St. John's?'"** —Ed De La Rosa, Fordham assistant coach



'Ahhhh,' like he thinks he's dying. Then you take him out of the game and he'll say, 'Coach, what did you do that for?'"

In his defense, Iverson's frenetic style of play invites injury. In the first three games this season, he injured a shoulder, bruised a thumb and took 19 stitches to close some facial cuts.

And as long as Iverson keeps putting up All-America numbers and playing like a lottery pick, Thompson will be more than happy to take a little whining with the winning.

### ROCKETS' GLARING OMISSION

Toledo coach Gary Pinkel walked into the locker room to address his football team before its bowl game. Looking around the room, he spotted the nation's No. 2 running back. He scanned the team that led Division I-A in turnover ratio, a team that did not lose

by the sports information office to wake up enough voters to the fact that Toledo belonged just cause for a team being overlooked.

"We look at ESPN and see teams that lost three or four games that are still in the Top 20," said Wasean Tait, whose 1,905 yards were second only to Heisman finalist Troy Davis. "It was like, how can they underrate us like that?"

Playing in the MAC is usually considered just cause for a team being overlooked. Plus, there's only room for one Cinderella in the hearts of the national media, and Northwestern snatched the glass slipper in Week One—even though the Wildcats lost to Miami of Ohio, the team that tied Toledo to smudge its perfect season.

Pinkel is 100 percent right—Toledo is probably not deserving of title contender status. But neither are the Rockets deserv-

"This is one of the most rewarding years of my life," said Pinkel, who went to 11 bowls in 12 seasons as an assistant at Washington but had never before been part of an undefeated season. "We have built a pretty good program here."

If only somebody noticed.

### DEAL WITH IT

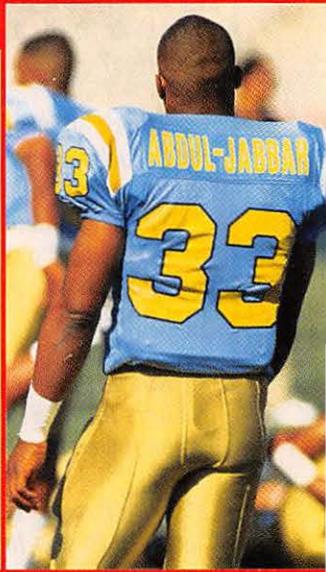
Their teams had not met since the 1993 season, but that doesn't mean the flames of competition do not remain perpetually stoked between Lou Holtz and Bobby Bowden.

At a pre-bowl gathering of the coaches of all six Alliance teams, the conversation

## ONE-ON-ONE

Karim Abdul-Jabbar had a pretty good year by most running back standards, rushing for 1,419 yards—including three straight 200-yard performances—and 14 touchdowns despite missing two full games with an ankle injury. But the fall of 1995 might not have been the best season ever enjoyed by a UCLA athlete named Abdul-Jabbar. When he changed his name for religious reasons from Sharman Shah to Karim Abdul-Jabbar, the comparisons to the first Kareem (though he went by his given name, Lew Alcindor, during his Bruins days) were inevitable. Here's the tale of the two Jabbars:

	KAREEM	KARIM
SEASON	1968-'69	1995
JERSEY NUMBER	33	33
CLASS	Senior	Junior
TEAM'S WINNING %	.967	.636
POINTS	721	74
% OF TEAM'S TOTAL POINTS	28.4	24.0
FIELD GOAL ATTEMPTS	477	0
CARRIES	Rarely called back then	270
% OF TEAM'S TOTAL PLAYS	23.9	36.2
NCAA TITLE?	Yes	No



a single game during the regular season.

But Pinkel's pep talk did not contain the words "alliance" or "national championship." Instead, he spoke of such pedestrian subjects as "Top 25" and "respect".

"We can't win a national championship at Toledo," said Pinkel, whose squad was one of three undefeated teams heading into bowl season. "I told our players that at the beginning of the season. But we have a goal—we want to be nationally ranked. For us to do that, we have to go undefeated."

Even that was barely enough for the Rockets to get noticed. They crept into the *Associated Press* Top 25—debuting in the 25th spot—on Nov. 26th, their first ranking since finishing the 1971 season ranked No. 14. And it took an exhaustive promotional campaign

ing of the snubbing they've received. They did everything asked of a football team—they played everybody on their schedule and didn't lose to any of them. Their opponents' combined record was 60-59, which was better than the combined record of Penn State's foes (61-61-4) during the Nittany Lions' 12-0 season in 1994 and the record of BYU's opponents (55-79-3) during its 1984 championship season.

All the Rockets got in return was increased support from their hometown fans, a congratulatory proclamation from Mayor Carty Finkbeiner and a trip from Toledo to Las Vegas that provided a 55-degree difference in temperature and a chance to play Nevada on national television. Toledo won, 40-37 in overtime, to finish 11-0-1.

turned to the new contracts tendered to Holtz and Bowden late in the regular season. What sparked the discussion was Holtz's open-ended deal with Notre Dame that will allow him to coach the Fighting Irish as long as he'd like, basically a lifetime contract.

"I guess that means I can be declared legally dead any time," Holtz said.

Bowden, who a month earlier reached an agreement with Florida State that will pay him \$975,000 annually—plus a \$50,000 bonus after his 25th year, which will earn him more than \$1 million following the 2000 football season—reacted appropriately for someone who could fully appreciate Holtz's new arrangement.

"He even outcontracted me," Bowden said. **CS**

## BASKETBALL

**1** Only two Division I teams have reached 37 victories in a single season. Name them.

**2** Which of these schools has the longest active streak of non-losing seasons?

- A. Indiana
- B. North Carolina
- C. Kentucky
- D. UCLA

**3** Which two ACC schools have never had a consensus All America?

**4** Which of these former North Carolina stars played the most minutes as a freshman?

- A. Michael Jordan
- B. Jerry Stackhouse
- C. Sam Perkins
- D. J.R. Reid

**5** Name the eight charter members of the Big East Conference when it was formed in 1979.

**6** Which was the last Big Ten team to win three consecutive undisputed conference titles?

- A. Michigan
- B. Indiana
- C. Purdue
- D. Ohio State

**7** What was the original name of the conference now known as the Atlantic 10?

**8** Which of these current SWC teams is the only one to post an all-time winning percentage of .500 or better in the NCAA Tournament?



How successful have the Bruins been over the years?

- A. Texas Christian
- B. SMU
- C. Houston
- D. Texas

**9** Name the two active coaches who have taken three different teams to the NCAA Tournament's Elite Eight.

## FOOTBALL

**10** Who is Nebraska's all-time leader in touchdown passes?

- A. David Humm
- B. Tommie Frazier
- C. Vince Ferragamo
- D. Turner Gill

**11** What current NFL running back holds the Division I-A

record for most all-purpose yards in a single game?

- A. Garrison Hearst, Georgia
- B. Barry Sanders, Oklahoma State
- C. Marshall Faulk, San Diego State
- D. Errict Rhett, Florida

**12** Which of these Oklahoma football stars did not win the Heisman Trophy?

- A. Billy Vessels
- B. Tommy McDonald
- C. Steve Owens
- D. Billy Sims

**13** Just three teams have been ranked in the final Associated Press Top 10 each of the three years prior to 1995. Who are they?

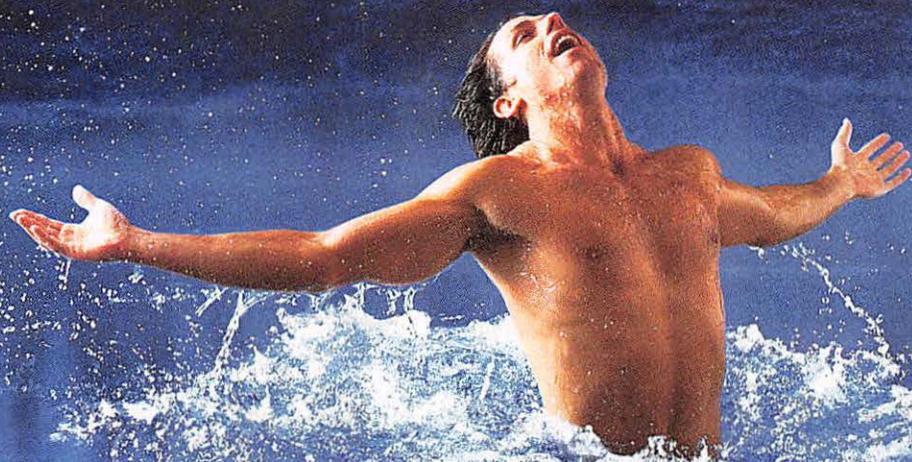
**14** Why are Army's colors black, gold and gray?

**15** USC has a better-than .500 record against all but one Pac-10 school. Name that school.

## ANSWERS

1. Duke in 1986 and UNLV in 1987.
2. D) UCLA with 46, dating back to 1949.
3. Clemson and Florida State.
4. C) Perkins played 1,199 minutes in 1981. Jordan is next with 1,079 in 1982.
5. Boston College, UConn, Georgetown, Providence, St. John's, Seton Hall, Syracuse and Villanova.
6. D) Ohio State, 1960-62. Syracuse and Villanova mark by winning the title this year.
7. The Eastern Collegiate Basketball League (1976).
8. C) Houston is 26-23 overall.
9. University of Alabama-Birmingham's Gene Bartow (Memphis, UCLA, UAB) and Oklahoma State's Eddie Sutton (Arkansas, Kentucky, OSU).
10. B) Tommie Frazier (43), who this season broke Humm's school mark of 41 set from 1972-74.
11. C) Marshall Faulk had 422 total yards against Pacific in 1991.
12. B) McDonald won the 1956 Maxwell Award but finished third in the Heisman balloting.
13. Florida State, which has been ranked in the AP final Top 10 every year since 1987, Florida (since 1991) and Texas A&M (since 1992).
14. They are the colors of charcoal, saltpeter and sulphur—the components of gunpowder.
15. The Trojans are 6-6 against Arizona State.

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# VIDEO GAME SHOWCASE

By Scott MacDougal

## FIFA '96

EA Sports  
For Sony PlayStation  
Players: 1-8

In the last few years, EA Sports has created the industry's finest line of soccer games with the acclaimed FIFA series. With FIFA '96, EA broadens its reach by embracing the Sony PlayStation and the results are as impressive as you'd expect.

As always, you get thousands of international players and dozens of international teams to play with, all of them presented with the most realistic details on the market. Deep gameplay, exciting trick moves and sharp graphics make you feel like you're actually on the field, a feeling compounded by the variety of views that give you different perspectives on the action. The sound is stronger than ever, featuring great crowd noises and authentic play-by-play commentary. If you're a soccer fan or a new PlayStation owner looking for great multi-player experiences, you can't go wrong with FIFA '96. It scores.



## High Velocity

Atlus  
For Sega Saturn  
Players: 1-2

Atlus tries to instill some thrills with this road race through treacherous mountains and along steep cliffs. While there are some good moments here, overall, High Velocity finishes in the middle of the pack.

With only three courses to choose from, your fun is going to be fairly limited right from the green flag. The game is too simplistic for sophisticated drivers who are used to weaving through traffic; here, you race against only one other car. You can switch views during the races from the driver's perspective to a chase-car camera but at no time are you overwhelmed by awesome graphics. Mediocre sound effects don't add much drama to the proceedings. Ultimately, High Velocity isn't a bad game, but it probably isn't strong or diverse enough to capture the hearts, minds and thumbs of serious gamers.



## Frank Thomas "Big Hurt" Baseball

Acclaim  
For Super NES, Game Boy and Game Gear  
Players: 1-2

Frank Thomas already has struck out on the Genesis, and now he brings his big bat to three more video game systems. While he at least makes contact in these new games, he still has yet to yank one out of the park with a great game. With "Big Hurt" Baseball, you get real-life players and a host of standard options (including a Home Run Derby), but the gameplay feels limited because of inaccurate pitching and flawed fielding. Fortunately, the graphics for batting are pretty impressive and the major league stadiums look sharp. Too bad there's no life in the sound effects, which are either absent or feeble. Surprisingly, "Big Hurt" Baseball works best as a handheld game. On the Game Boy and Genesis, the gameplay is simpler, more straightforward and better-looking. Take Frank Thomas to go on the Game Gear, not on the 16-bit systems.



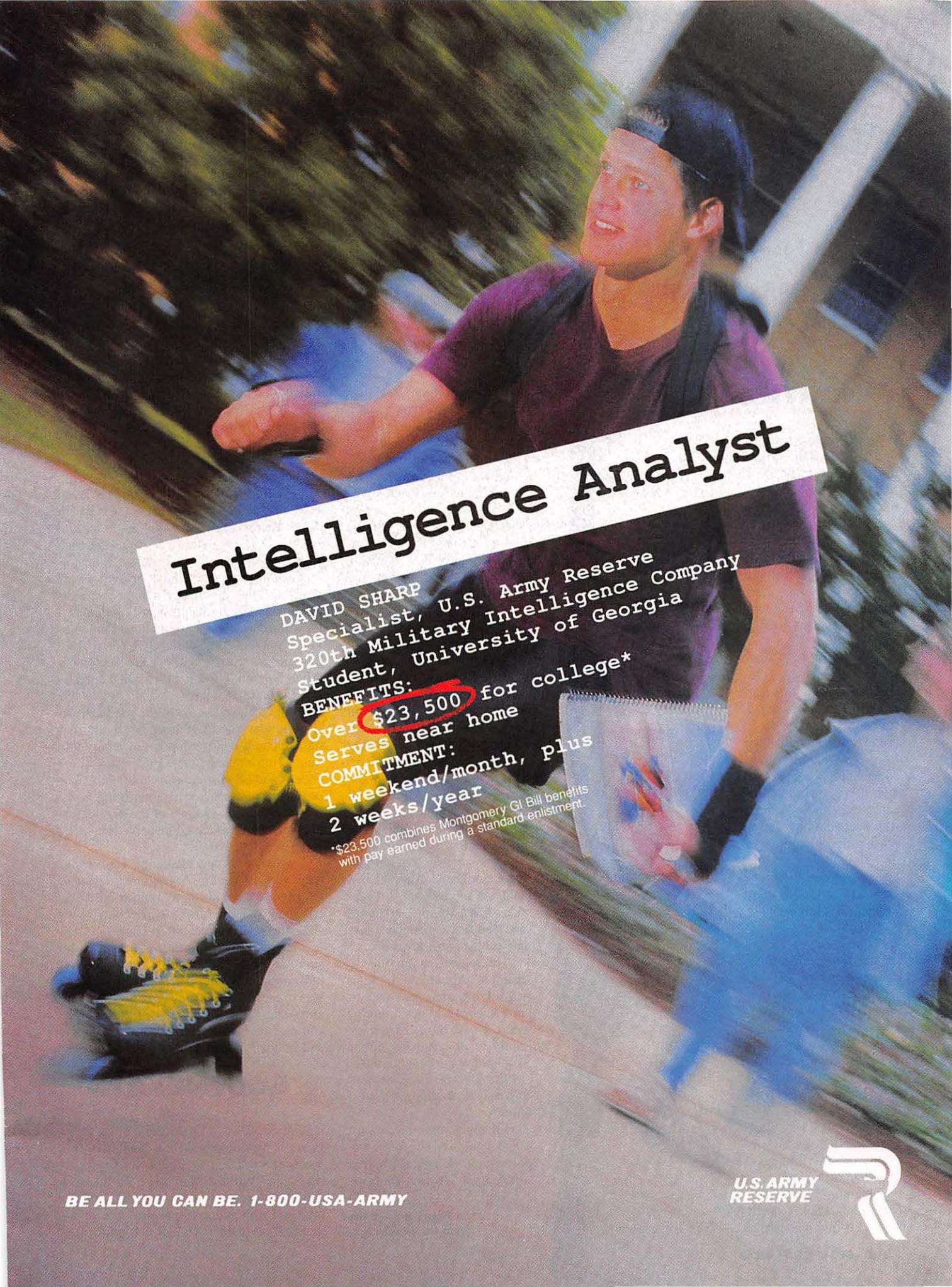
## NCAA Championship Basketball

GTE Entertainment  
For Personal Computers  
Players: 2

NCAA Championship Basketball is every armchair player's chance to take the court. NCAA Basketball allows you to coach and play for any one of 64 Division I teams, including Michigan, Kansas and defending champion UCLA. Gamers will love the use of a technique typical of role-playing games such as Dungeons & Dragons, in which the players get progressively better with experience. It's a unique concept for sports games that comes off nicely.

Consequently, over the course of a season—and a player's four-year career—you can watch raw freshmen develop into polished seniors. On the down side, since Basketball is a PC-based CD-ROM game, the player movements are not as fluid as standard sports games. All in all, Basketball is a winning opening shot.





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# Around The Rim

## A New Page In Hoyas History

### NORTHEAST

It was a subtle warning but a warning nonetheless. When John Thompson spoke in the preseason of the impact he expected from freshman Victor Page, he used words like "significant" along with "very." Such positively bubbling praise from the notoriously guarded Georgetown coach should have triggered alarms throughout the Big East—this Page kid was going to be a handful.

A 6-foot-3, 205-pound freshman, Page has the requisite skills to thrive at either off-guard or small forward. In high school, he proved he could score from anywhere, averaging 33.1 points per game as a senior. By the time his college career was a month old, he was second on the team in scoring and had emerged as the three-point shooting threat missing at Georgetown since the days of Reggie Williams and Mark Tillmon.

"Victor is a great player," Georgetown sophomore Allen Iverson said. "He likes to get up and down the floor like I do. I needed somebody to take the pressure off of me."

If nothing else, Page has done precisely that. A year ago, Iverson was Georgetown's top scorer in 23 of its 31 games. The knock against him was his inability or unwillingness to utilize his teammates, but Iverson rarely had a better choice than to keep the ball himself.

That is no longer the case. When Iverson



and Georgia Tech freshman Stephon Marbury commanded the headlines during their Preseason NIT semifinal showdown, it was Page who stole the show, scoring a game-high 25 points in the Hoyas' win.

"This definitely is a fun season for me," senior center Othella Harrington said. "I've been getting a kick out of this, watching Jerome [Williams], Allen and Vic do their things."

### THANKS, CUZ

Otis Hill wasn't interested in basketball anymore. Last year, after a miserable two-point performance against Arizona as a Syracuse sophomore, Hill thought about calling it quits. Hill's father had passed away suddenly the previous April and, despite all attempts to overcome the pain, he was still suffering. Friends and family consoled him, as did the coaching staff. Through it all, he kept harkening back to something his cousin, Boston College star Danya Abrams, had told him shortly after Hill's father died. Abrams, after all, had a similar experience, having lost his father at age 11.

"He needed someone to lean on," Abrams said. "I got permission from my coach to leave school and go to the funeral. I told him, 'Life goes on,' and to do what his father would have expected him to."

"I tried to be there for him, not only as a cousin, but as a friend."

Hill stuck out the season and came on strong in the postseason. He started impressively again this season, post-

**Victor Page has given the Hoyas an offensive jolt.**

ing a pair of 20-point games and regaining his starting position. He's got a whole new attitude, one bolstered by his cousin's advice.

"I'm going to get back in there and start having fun," Hill told the *Syracuse Post-Standard*.

### MIDWEST

### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

It's no secret why conference mergers in the '90s are becoming commonplace: Just follow the money. But while the deal-makers quickly work to alter TV schedules and promote new rivalries, often lost in the transition are the players who suddenly find themselves preparing for much different challenges almost overnight.

Take for instance **Notre Dame's** Ryan Hoover. During his first three seasons in South Bend, the 6-1 shooting guard faced a mishmash of the nation's talent as the Irish played an independent schedule.

Then, Hoover learned that his senior year would be quite different. No longer were his opponents largely faceless until game day. Now they were some of the most recognizable players in college basketball—Villanova's Kerry Kittles, Georgetown's Allen Iverson, UConn's Ray Allen and Felipe Lopez of St. John's.

"We've played some of the top teams in the country since I've been here, and that has prepared us for what we're seeing this year," Hoover said. "[The Big East] conference is sort of a different style of ball, more physical and uptempo. It's interesting to see how it compares to some of the big conferences we've played against like the ACC, Big Ten and Pac-10."

Driven by his new challenge, Hoover decided to play in a Pro-Am summer league in Chicago to hone his skills against NBA talent such as Tim Hardaway, Glenn Robinson, Juwan Howard and Ron Harper.

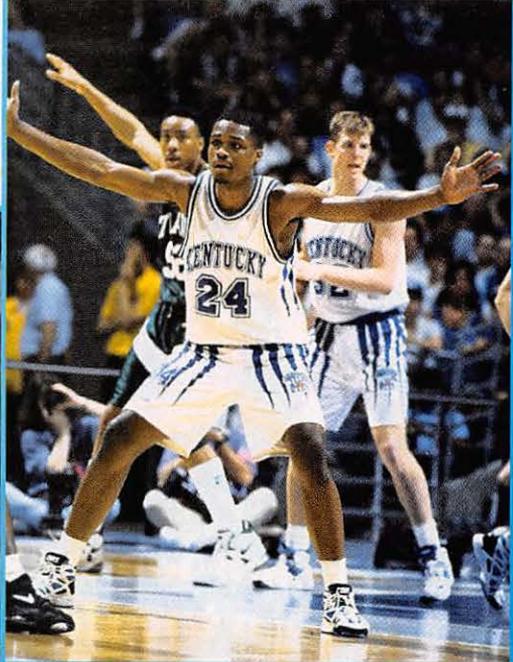
"There were some great guards in the summer league, some of the best in basketball, and the reason I played this summer was to prepare for guys like Kittles, Iverson and Allen," Hoover said. "They're obviously some of the greatest talent in the country, and I think I prepared myself pretty well."

### SOUTHEAST

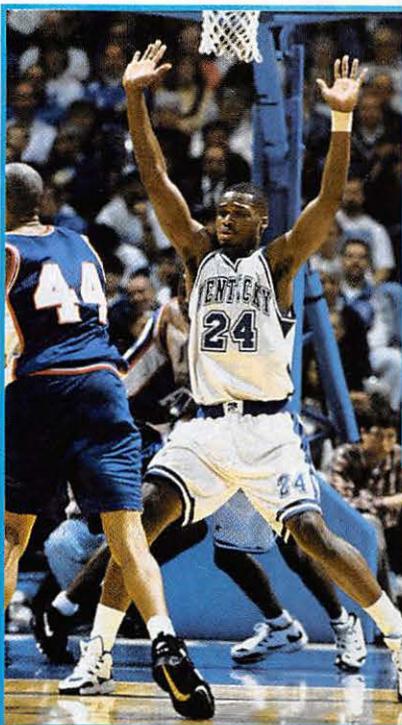
### DRESSED TO THE K'S

Fans of **Kentucky's** APEX-designed uniforms of a year ago no doubt were bummed when their Wildcats took the floor this season in a more traditional uniform sans the blue and white tiger stripes. But fret not all you fashion junkies. On Feb. 11 while host-

Antoine Walker models something old (right) and something new for Big Blue.



BOIAN SPURLOCK



BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

and a strong SEC showing could be enough to land the Commodores an NCAA invite.

If Seckar gets there, eighth-graders across the country might be treated to something special.

## WEST

### GREEN BACKS

Jerry Green and his **Oregon Ducks** were the color of money last year, winning 19 games and advancing to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 34 years. But building upon strides made last year will be difficult for a team void of seniors.

Junior point guard Kenya Wilkins is the lone returning starter and is a good one. Lightning quick and possessing good leadership skills, Wilkins (5-10) averaged 12.1 ppg. and entered the season second all-time in assists at Oregon. But the Ducks are hoping a pair of **UC Santa Barbara** transfers—junior forwards Kyle Milling (6-8) and Rob Ramaker (6-9)—can offset the heavy graduation losses. Both were voted Big West Freshman of the Year prior to leaving UCSB—Milling in '93, Ramaker in '94.

"They've taken our team to a whole other level," Wilkins said. "I don't know how they got here, but I'm thankful they did."

As Wilkins' role has evolved into that of team leader, he's convinced that, despite the personnel changes, success in Eugene is here to stay.

"I see a program that has made the turn around the corner," Wilkins said. "I don't see us going back to the old Oregon. All that we needed was to get the mentality that we're going to win, where in the past they might have played not to lose." **CS**

ing Arkansas, the trend-setting Wildcats will once again shock the college basketball fashion world with yet another new take on uniforms—denim.

The head-to-toe uniform concept by Converse is called "Cons Blue." Not to be outdone, the Hogs also will debut a new Converse-based look called "The Muscle."

### THE SECRET IS SECKAR

The moment itself lasted all of six seconds, but the effects are still being felt nearly eight years later.

It was the first round of the 1988 NCAA Tournament and **Vanderbilt** needed a miracle. Barry Goheen, a senior guard, delivered, hitting two three-pointers in the final six seconds of regulation to force overtime, during which the Commodores eliminated Pitt. Goheen's heroics so captured the imagination of an eighth-grader watching ESPN's *Sports-Center* that night in Oshkosh, Wis., that when it came time for Frank Seckar to make his college commitment, Vandy was on the tip of his tongue and the top of the list.

"I still didn't know much about them until they started recruiting me," Seckar said.

Few people outside the Southeastern Conference know much about Seckar, a versatile 6-1 senior. As a junior, he was among the SEC leaders in assists (4.1 per game), steals (2.6) and three-point shooting (42.6 percent).

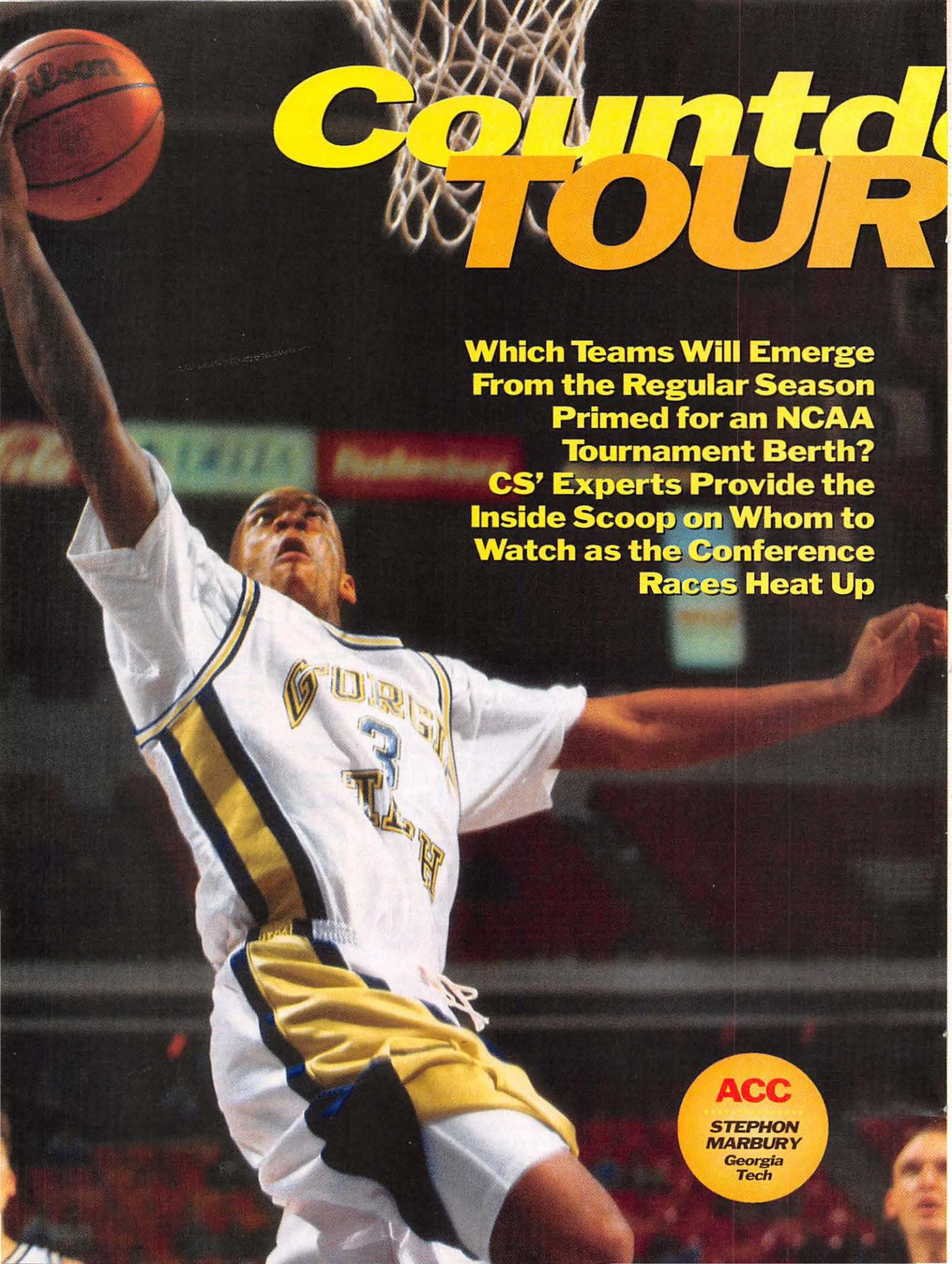
"It's been tough, but I guess I like being underrated," Seckar said, speaking for his team as much as himself. "You get to sneak up on people that way."

Just ask UCLA and Virginia, two of Vandy's early upset victims. Those wins

## KEEPING SCORE CONFERENCE SCORING LEADERS

It's been said—most often by recruiters at small schools—that if you're good enough, the NBA will find you. Judging by the impressive names on the following list of all-time leading scorers by conference, that sales pitch is true. Here's how today's top stars compare to their respective league's all-time best. (Conference USA, not included, is in its first year. All active totals are preseason.)

CONFERENCE	ACTIVE LEADER	TOP ALL-TIME SCORER
American West	Sean Allen, 410 (conf. only) Sr., Southern Utah	Sean Allen, 410
ACC	Johnny Rhodes, 1,241 Sr., Maryland	Dickie Hemric, 2,587 Wake Forest
Atlantic 10	Kwame Evans, 1,180 Sr., George Washington	Mark Macon, 2,609 Temple
Big East	Kerry Kittles, 977 (conf. only) Sr., Villanova	Lawrence Moten, 1,405 Syracuse
Big Eight	Ryan Minor, 1,307 Sr., Oklahoma	Danny Manning, 2,951 Kansas
Big Sky	Jimmy DeGraffenried, 987 Sr., Weber State	Orlando Lightfoot, 2,102 Idaho
Big South	Scott Hartzell, 1,176 Sr., UNC-Greensboro	Tony Dunkin, 2,151 Coastal Carolina
Big Ten	Brian Evans, 1,043 Sr., Indiana	Calbert Cheaney, 2,613 Indiana
Big West	Eric Franson, 1,011 Sr., Utah State	Lucious Harris, 2,312 Long Beach State
Colonial	Odell Hodge, 1,079 Jr., Old Dominion	David Robinson, 2,669 Navy
Ivy	Eric Blackiston, 820 Sr., Brown	Bill Bradley, 2,503 Princeton
MAAC	Micheal Meeks, 1,340 Sr., Canisius	Lionel Simmons, 3,217 La Salle
Mid-American	Craig Thames, 1,265 Sr., Toledo	Ron Harper, 2,377 Miami (Ohio)
Mid-Continent	Garrick Vicks, 889 Sr., Western Illinois	Tony Bennett, 2,285 UW-Green Bay
MEAC	Aaron McKinney, 794 Sr., Maryland-Eastern Shore	Tom Davis, 2,275 Delaware State
Midwestern Coll.	Jeff Nordgaard, 1,256 Sr., UW-Green Bay	Alfredrick Hughes, 2,914 Loyola (Ill.)
Missouri Valley	Deon Jackson, 1,158 Sr., Bradley	Hersey Hawkins, 3,008 Bradley
North Atlantic	Eddie Benton, 1,838 Sr., Vermont	Reggie Lewis, 2,709 Northeastern
Northeast	Chris McCuthrie, 1,650 Sr., Mount St. Mary's	Terrance Bailey, 2,591 Wagner
Ohio Valley	Marcus Brown, 1,469 Sr., Murray State	Joe Jakubick, 2,583 Akron
Pac-10	Ron Riley, 1,291 Sr., Arizona State	Don MacLean, 2,608 UCLA
Patriot	Matt Lueking, 1,510 Sr., Army	Rob Feaster, 2,224 Holy Cross
SEC	Tony Delk, 1,251 Sr., Kentucky	Pete Maravich, 3,667 LSU
Southern	Anquell McCollum, 1,030 Sr., Western Carolina	Skip Henderson, 2,574 Marshall
Southland	Brian Myers, 749 Sr., Texas-Arlington	Dwight Lamar, 3,493 Southwestern La.
Southwest	Jason Sasser, 1,497 Sr., Texas Tech	Terrence Rencher, 2,306 Texas
SWAC	Tim Roberts, 1,548 Sr., Southern	Harry Kelly, 3,066 Texas Southern
Sun Belt	Artemus McClary, 1,271 Sr., Jacksonville	Charlie Bradley, 2,319 South Florida
Trans America	Kerry Blackshear, 1,393 Sr., Stetson	Willie Jenkins, 2,535 Centenary
West Coast	Gerald Walker, 1,331 Sr., San Francisco	Hank Gathers, 2,490 Loyola Marymount
WAC	Keith Van Horn, 1,246 Jr., Utah	Danny Ainge, 2,467 BYU

A basketball player in a white and yellow uniform is captured mid-air, jumping to shoot a basketball. The player's jersey has "DURHAM STATE" and the number "3" visible. The basketball hoop and net are visible in the upper right corner.

# Countdown TOUR

**Which Teams Will Emerge  
From the Regular Season  
Primed for an NCAA  
Tournament Berth?  
CS' Experts Provide the  
Inside Scoop on Whom to  
Watch as the Conference  
Races Heat Up**

**ACC**

**STEPHON  
MARBURY**  
Georgia  
Tech

# Down To TOURNEY TIME

**ACC** The first two letters in NCAA might as well stand for North Carolina, an entrant in every Tournament field since 1975. Dean Smith holds the mark for all-time NCAA Tournament wins, yet each year he professes doubt he'll make the field. Don't believe him. The Heels have been in seven of the last eight ACC championship games, haven't finished below third in the ACC in 31 years and currently have an NCAA-record string of 25 straight 20-win seasons.

The other teams in last year's four-way tie for first—Wake Forest, Virginia and Maryland—also should get tourney bids. The Demon Deacons are 16-4 during February and early March since shot-blocking center Tim Duncan arrived and they will inhabit the post-season as long as he's around. Virginia, with 12 conference victories last year, enjoyed its first double-digit league win total since the Ralph Sampson Era, but a repeat is unlikely. Maryland, which relies on Johnny Rhodes, Exree Hipp, Duane Simpkins and Keith Booth, won six straight ACC games last year for the first time since 1978-'79, largely because of the one starter not back—Joe Smith.

The ACC last year received its fewest tournament bids since 1983, but now everyone has a chance to crash the party. Clemson and Duke can do it with defense; Florida State, which lost six of its last seven games last year, with talent and an up-tempo style; Georgia Tech behind Matt Harpring and creative guards Drew Barry and Stephon Marbury; and North Carolina State with center Todd Fuller.

Watch for Duke's revenge this year now that Coach K is back. On Feb. 11, Duke will play Wake, which owned a five-game winning streak over Duke before this year, and on Feb. 28, the Blue Devils play Maryland, which snapped a 15-game losing streak against Duke last season.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Ricky Peral, Wake Forest. When the 6-foot-10 forward shoots and rebounds aggressively, he makes Duncan and the Deacs doubly dangerous.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Georgia Tech. The Yellow Jackets stumbled down the stretch the last two years, hurt by injuries to key players. Good health—and harmony between Barry and Marbury—should change that.—*BARRY JACOBS*

**Atlantic 10** Temple has a small numbers problem—namely that UMass has theirs. UMass has won seven of the teams' last eight games and has beaten Temple three straight years in the A-10 tournament final.

Things are different in the Atlantic 10 this year, though, with five new teams bringing the conference membership to 12. The additions add an interesting dynamic to February road trips, particularly because UMass travels to two of the tougher newcomers, Xavier and Virginia Tech, in February.

One team the Minutemen won't play on the road—fortunately for them—is George Washington, which is 17-2 against UMass in Washington, D.C., and beat UMass twice last season, becoming the first team to sweep the Minutemen since 1982. The Colonials, led by swingman Kwame Evans and 7-foot-1 center Alexander Koul, also snapped UMass' 41-game home winning streak last year. Don't think UMass coach John Calipari won't remind his team of that when GW comes calling on Feb. 24.

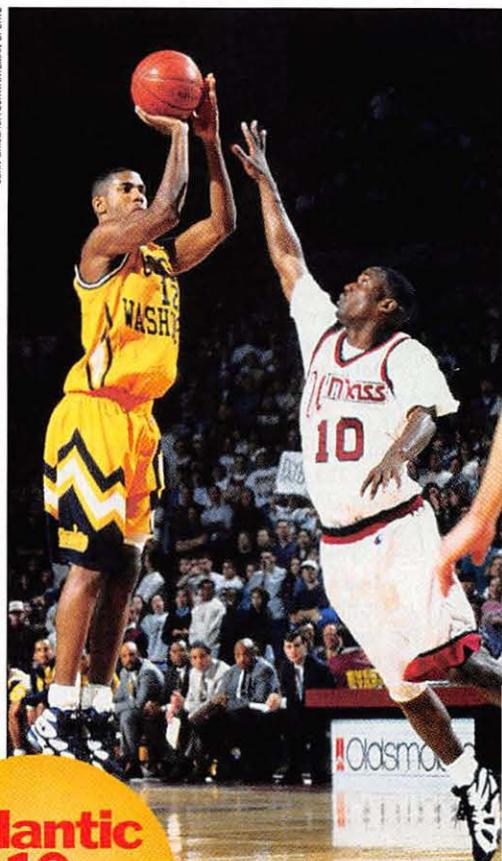
Despite the changes, Temple and UMass, both in the East Division, remain among the favorites. The Owls, who have been to 13 A-10 tournament semifinals in as many years, tend to improve throughout the season, whereas UMass starts hot and stays hot. "We're on a mission this year," UMass' Marcus Camby said. "Everybody said we couldn't get it done this year without Lou [Roe] and Derek [Kellogg]."

UMass is 32-10 in March under coach John Calipari, 23-4 in March over the last four seasons. Also to UMass' advantage, the regular-season champion has won eight of the last 10 tournament titles. Virginia Tech, last season's NIT champion, is the favorite in the West Division, which features four new members.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Marcus Camby, UMass. The top player in the conference—and maybe the most dominant in the country—Camby has shown he can carry his team.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** George Washington. Evans, a talented outside scorer, and Koul, an inside force, make a lethal late-season combination.—*BRENDAN HEALEY*

JOHN GRESHOP/SCHWARTZMAN SPORTS



## Atlantic 10

**KWAME EVANS**  
George Washington

## Big East

The Big East will benefit from the fact that Villanova, Georgetown and Connecticut surfaced as Top 10 teams early in December. All three have a shot at a No. 1 or 2 seed—if they don't beat up each other in the league season.

Villanova has its best starting five since 1971 and is built along the classic lines of a Final Four team, with center Jason Lawson, a 6-11 shot-blocker; 6-7 forward Eric Eberz, a pure shooter; guard Kerry Kittles, a go-to All America; Chuck Kornegay, a classic power forward; and Alvin Williams, an experienced point guard. Williams led the Wildcats to an 8-1 record as a fill-in starter last February.

Georgetown has seen 6-10 sophomore Jahidi White become more of a factor and the

# TOURNEY TIME

backcourt of sophomore Allen Iverson and freshman Victor Page mature rapidly to give John Thompson the perimeter offense that was missing last season. When Syracuse and UConn won at Georgetown last year, it was the first time the Hoyas had lost two in a row at home since 1981-'82. Georgetown hosts both UConn and Villanova in the league season's final two weeks; those games may decide the champion.

UConn, coming off an Elite Eight season, is tournament-tested. The Huskies depend heavily on All America Ray Allen and Doron Sheffer, arguably the best backcourt in the country, but that should be enough to carry them while their forwards develop.

As many as four other teams could join those three in the tourney. Syracuse, which lost three straight league games last year for the first time since 1989, does not have the same level of talent as in the past and faces a difficult February schedule. But the Orangemen, who have won 10 league games each of the past 10 years and at least 20 overall games in the past 13 seasons, have history on their side, plus a star forward in John Wallace.

Heavyweight forward Danya Abrams has been a major force for Boston College and freshman lead guard Scoonie Penn has been a revelation, giving the Eagles the ballhandler they desperately missed last season when they lost eight of their last nine games. The Eagles, though, did win at home against Georgetown, which hasn't won at Conte Forum since BC moved there in 1991. The Hoyas' next shot comes Feb. 13.

Miami, whose NIT appearance last year was its first postseason action since 1964, and Pitt may surprise some teams come February. A lot will depend on how well the 'Canes, whose nine league wins last year were more than the previous three years combined, survive a rugged early conference schedule. But they will be done with The Big Three by February and have the potential to go on a roll with a late seven-game stretch of home games against West Virginia, BC and St. John's and winnable trips to West Virginia, Rutgers and Notre Dame. The 'Canes rotate 11 players and have become much more efficient defensively as a result. They were 9-1 in games decided by six points or less last year.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Steven Edwards, Miami. A game-breaker, Edwards will have to step up for Miami to make a run.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Pitt. Ralph Willard's coaching makes Pitt a contender, as does the re-emergence of redshirt senior lead guard Jerry McCullough and the fact that the Panthers' pool of young talent only figures to get better as the season progresses.—*DICK WEISS*

**Big Eight** Kansas players don't want to be sitting around in late March as they did last season when they were upset in the Midwest Region semifinals by Virginia. That's why they have bulked up for the March run with an intense offseason

weightlifting program.

"We knew we had to get stronger," Kansas' Sean Pearson said. "Somebody wrote up on the board in our locker room, 'Everybody has the will to win, but only national champions have the will to prepare to win in the offseason.'"

The Jayhawks' last made the Final Four in 1993 but should have the muscle to win the rugged Big Eight.

Their new-found strength should complement a dazzling fastbreak, led by junior Jacque Vaughn, who is on pace to become the Big Eight's all-time assist leader. The conference's top freshman, 6-6 forward Paul Pierce, should bolster KU's inside play down the stretch.

One surprising stumbling block may be the Jayhawks' game at Iowa State Feb. 17; Kansas has lost three of its last four games in Ames.

Missouri has become a good Tournament team after several years of early-round flameouts.

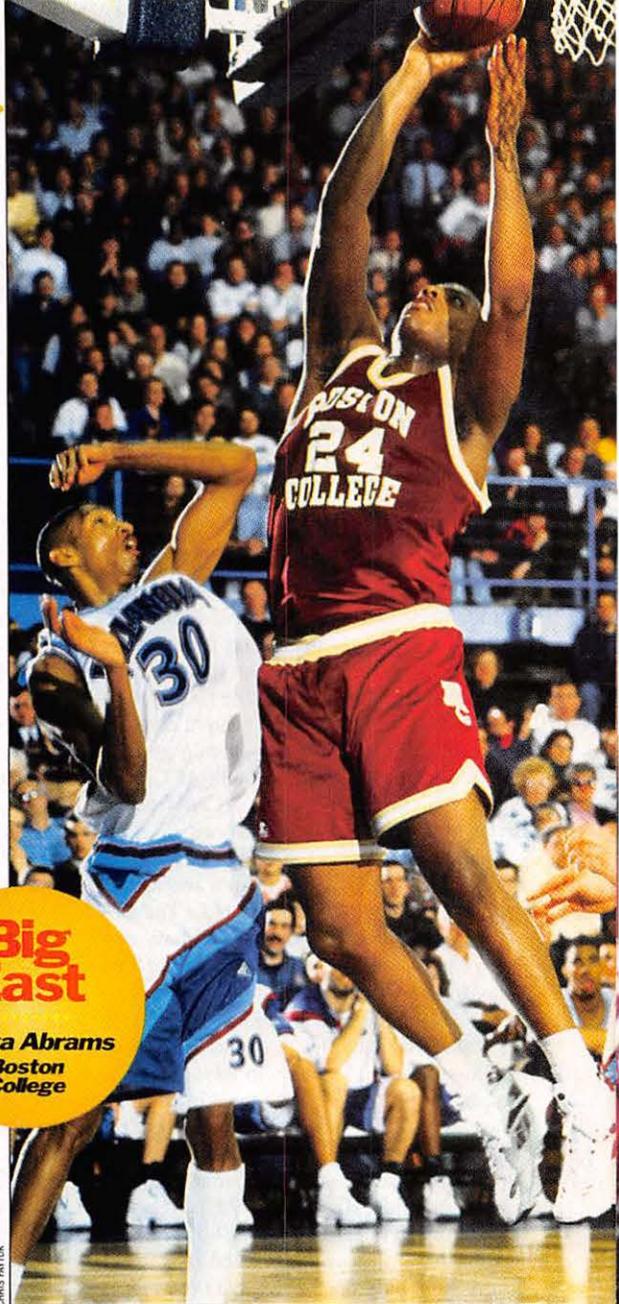
The Tigers, who made the Elite Eight in 1994 and lost to eventual champion UCLA by one point in the second round last year, have a deep team. Ten or more players are capable of scoring in double figures.

The key to the Tigers' chances is the development of shooter Danny Allouche, a 21-year-old freshman from Israel.

Oklahoma's 6-7 forward Ryan Minor carried the Sooners last season. But two first-year players, 6-9 Bobby Joe Evans and 6-11 Evan Wiley, should mature enough by the end of February to alleviate some of the pressure on Minor. A year ago, the Sooners did not lose a conference game at home and knocked off four ranked teams in late February and early March.

Like the Sooners, Oklahoma State was perfect at home in the Big Eight last year. Eddie Sutton may not lead the Cowboys to a second straight Final Four, but transfers Maurice Robinson and Jerome Lambert should keep them among the league's best. Oklahoma State, with 20 or more victories in each of Sutton's five seasons, has been to five straight NCAA Tournaments and has not finished lower than second in the Big Eight during that stretch.

Nebraska failed to make the Tournament last season after four consecutive trips. Although the Huskers have yet to win a first-round NCAA game, this could be the season. They won two early-season tournaments and should be better prepared for Big Eight play with 6-6 senior Jaron Boone al-



**Big East**

**Danya Abrams**  
Boston College

CHRIS FAYOK

lowed to roam the floor now that he no longer has to distribute the ball.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Tyronn Lue, Nebraska. The Huskers have their first true point since 1987 in Lue, a 6-0 freshman speedster.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Iowa State is loaded with junior college players and transfers, but is better defensively and more athletic than last season's team, which won a game in the NCAA Tournament.—*STEVE RICHARDSON*

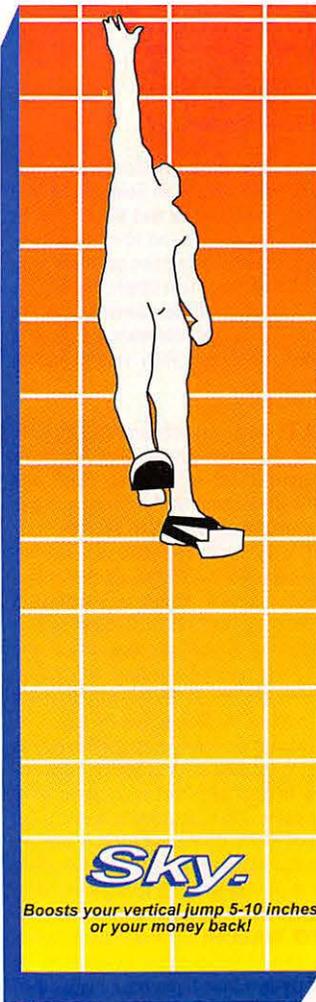
**Big Ten** None of the six Big Ten teams that reached the Tournament last year got out of their first-round town alive. Only Purdue won a game. Be prepared for a similar postseason this year.

The conference will get its usual half-dozen NCAA berths—no Big Ten team with a 10-8 league record has ever been denied an invitation—but few will surpass a No. 6 seed in regional placement. Only Iowa appears to have a chance to make the Sweet 16, though star Jess Settles sees the possibility of others.

"The Big Ten is one of the top two confer-

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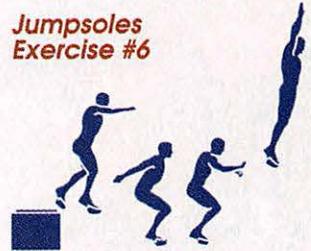
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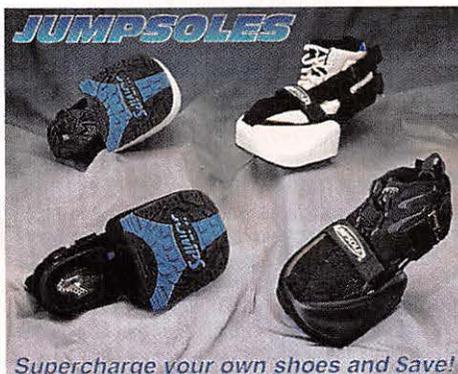


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**Big Ten**

**Maurice Taylor**  
Michigan

ences in terms of preparing you for the Tournament," he said.

The Hawkeyes will be ready, with four havoc-wreaking two-way players in Settles, Chris Kingsbury, Andre Woolridge and Kenyon Murray. Iowa lacks depth, but that's less of a postseason factor with the TV timeouts.

Michigan and Purdue are a study in contrast. The Wolverines haven't won a Big Ten title since 1986 but have been to three NCAA title games and won it all in 1989. In their three Final Four years (1989, '92 and '93), they did something perhaps nobody else ever has—they had a better winning percentage in the NAAs (16-2, .889) than in February and March regular-season games (26-8, .765).

The two-time defending champion Boilermakers have four Big Ten titles since 1987 and are hoping to become the first team to win or share three straight titles since Indiana won four from 1972-'76. But they haven't played in a single Final Four in that span.

Purdue doesn't have the talent to go deep into the tourney, but either Michigan or Indiana could win two or three games if young stars Maurice Taylor of the Wolverines and Andrae Patterson of the Hoosiers mature.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Chris Kingsbury, Iowa. He is the kind of miracle-shot player who captures imaginations in March. Kingsbury can drill 25-footers with ease.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Michigan State. The Spartans opened some eyes by beating

## Two for the Show

Conferences that figure to place two teams in the NCAA Tournament.

**COLONIAL:** Old Dominion got a taste of a big-time victory in the NAAs last year and is hungry for more. The Monarchs, who stunned Villanova in the first round a year ago, have the league's best player in 6-9 junior center Odell Hodge. Sidelined with a knee injury for all but four games last year, he was granted a medical redshirt season and is better than ever. Returning starters Brion Dunlap and Mario Mullen add more tourney experience to coach Jeff Capel's club.

Virginia Commonwealth could become a regular Colonial tourney representative. A former Metro Conference doormat, the Rams have a tough enforcer inside in 6-7, 250-pound senior forward Bernard Hopkins. Coach Sonny Smith is keeping his fingers crossed that last year's poor free throw shooting doesn't return to haunt his team late.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Odell Hodge, Old Dominion. Two years ago, Hodge became the only sophomore chosen to the CAA's All-Decade team and was the first sophomore since Navy's David Robinson to be named conference Player of the Year.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** George Mason went 7-20 overall and 2-12 in the league a year ago, but four starters have returned, as have the top five scorers. Coach Paul Westhead worked magic in his third year at Loyola Marymount, reaching the Elite Eight. Can it happen again in his third year at George Mason?—O.K. Davis

**MAAC:** The MAAC enjoyed an outstanding showing in postseason play last year. The conference put two teams—regular-season champion Manhattan and tourney titlist St. Peter's—in the NAAs and Canisius made the Final Four in the NIT. Manhattan, which upset Oklahoma in the NAAs, has a toughie at St. Peter's on Feb. 18. And if Canisius wants the regular-season title, it can't relax the weekend of Feb. 23—the Golden Griffins host St. Peter's on Feb. 23 and travel to Manhattan Feb. 25.

Don't expect the regular-season champion to cruise to the tournament trophy, though. Since 1991, Manhattan is the only team to win both in the same season. "There's tremendous pressure at the mid- and low-major level in the conference championship game," coach Fran Fraschilla said. "Nine times out of 10, you need to win the tournament to get into the NAAs." Fraschilla's Jaspers earned an at-large bid last year, but their focus remains on the conference tournament. "We talk all year about three days in March," Fraschilla said.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Mikkel Larsen, Iona. The 6-10 center stands head and shoulders above the league's big men.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Canisius. Seniors Darrell Barley and Micheal Meeks are a potent duo.—Brendan Healey

**MISSOURI VALLEY:** When Bradley started playing for keeps last season, Deon was hardly neon. After making the All-MVC team as a sophomore and averaging 17 points during the first nine games of his junior season, Deon Jackson started to flicker.

During one seven-game stretch, the 6-6 forward never took more than 10 shots in a game. "I got in this slump and it was just horrible for me," said Jackson, who averaged less than 13 points a game. Bradley won 20 and earned its second straight NIT bid, but Jackson leads a veteran team that has higher hopes. "It can't happen that bad again this season," he said.

Tulsa, fresh off consecutive Sweet 16 appearances, seems primed for another tourney appearance. Junior Shea Seals leads an experienced group that includes 6-11 Ray Poindexter, 6-10

Jeremy Rollo and 6-11 Rafael Maldonado.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Shea Seals, Tulsa. The junior swingman does it all. He was the only player in MVC history to finish in the Top 10 in scoring, rebounding and assists in his first two seasons.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Southern Illinois. The Salukis have won the last three MVC tournaments to get the automatic NCAA bid. But the only returning starter is Shane Hawkins, so coach Rich Herrin had to rebuild.—Jeff Gordon

**SUN BELT:** When crunch time arrives, conference coaches have two worries: The Sun Belt's postseason tournament is at Little Rock and Arkansas-Little Rock coach Wimp Sanderson has an impressive resumé of postseason success.

Sanderson, who won five Southeastern Conference tournaments while at Alabama, got the Trojans to the Sun Belt title game in his first season at UALR and lost by three points to Western Kentucky with an injury-depleted lineup. Junior guard Malik Dixon, who averaged 22.1 points before going down with foot injuries eight games into the '94-'95 season, and senior Derek Fisher could put the Trojans over the top.

"We just try to get ourselves in position to play as well as we can in the first week of March," Sanderson said. "I try to emphasize that every game is the championship game. The championship game is not Tuesday night on ESPN. It's the game you're playing."

"The team that hosts this tournament has never won it. If you're playing well, the tournament could be in Saigon and you'd have a chance to win it."

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Chris Robinson, Western Kentucky. In his first 19 games last season, he shot just 25.4 percent from three-point range. Then he hit 20 of his last 51 treys, which set up his drive and turned him into a well-rounded swingman.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Southwestern Louisiana. While enduring a disastrous 7-22 season, the Ragin' Cajuns threw their blue-chip recruiting class into the fray. Now, four sophomores return as starters and, by season's end, this might be a team that could take a run at the league tourney title.—J.G.

**WEST COAST:** Santa Clara knows all about defending a regular-season conference championship. Following the six times the Broncos won the West Coast Conference title, they repeated three times and finished second once.

The Broncos closed out the '94-'95 regular season with a 7-1 record, but they actually lost their last three games. They finished the regular season by losing to Pepperdine, were upset by Loyola Marymount in the conference tournament and then lost to Mississippi State in the NCAA Tournament. Santa Clara hosts this year's conference tournament, but the Broncos have yet to win any of the three previous tourneys they have hosted.

St. Mary's also has an excellent shot at the postseason. The Gaels look to continue their improvement after going 13-14 and 18-10 over the last two seasons. They closed last season by winning 12 of 14, including eight of their nine February games.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** A.J. Rollins, St. Mary's. The 6-8 forward was slowed last year due to a nagging hamstring injury. As a sophomore two years ago, he averaged 12 points and six rebounds a game and earned all-conference honorable mention.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Gonzaga. The Bulldogs return three starters from a team that reached the NCAA Tournament last year.—Patrick Kinahan.

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YOU'LL KNOW WHO  
RAN  
YOU OVER.**



**ONLY FOR SNES**



# TOURNEY TIME

## One and Done

Conferences that figure to send only one team to the NCAA Tournament.

### BIG SKY

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Weber State  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Jason Jackman, Idaho  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Idaho

### BIG SOUTH

**TOURNEY TEAM:** UNC-Greensboro  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Eric Cuthrell, UNC-Greensboro  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Charleston So.

### BIG WEST

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Utah State  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Eric Franson, Utah State  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** UC Irvine

### IVY

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Penn  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Brian Earl, Princeton  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Dartmouth

### MID-AMERICAN

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Miami (Ohio)  
*(see story, p. 34)*  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Earl Boykins, Eastern Michigan  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Eastern Michigan

### MID-CONTINENT

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Valparaiso  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Bryce Drew, Valparaiso  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Western Illinois

### MID-EASTERN ATHLETIC

**TOURNEY TEAM:** So. Carolina St.  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Derrick Patterson, So. Carolina St.  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Coppin State

### MIDWESTERN COLLEGIATE

**TOURNEY TEAM:** UW-GB  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Jeff Nordgaard, UW-GB  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Wright State

### NORTH ATLANTIC

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Drexel  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Malik Rose, Drexel  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Boston Univ.

### NORTHEAST

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Rider  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Charles Smith, Rider  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Monmouth

### OHIO VALLEY

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Murray State  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Marcus Brown, Murray State  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Tennessee State

### PATRIOT

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Bucknell  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Adonal Foyle, Colgate  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Navy

### SOUTHERN

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Davidson  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Brandon Williams, Davidson  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Marshall

### SOUTHLAND

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Stephen F. Austin  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Marlon Anderson, Texas-San Antonio  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** McNeese State

### SWAC

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Texas Southern  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Kevin Granger, Texas Southern  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** Jackson State

### TAAC

**TOURNEY TEAM:** Mercer  
**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Thaddeus Delaney, College of Charleston  
**SLEEPER TEAM:** College of Charleston

## Sitting Out

(No automatic bids)

### AMERICA WEST:

Southern Utah, Cal State-Sacramento, Cal State-Northridge, Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo

### INDEPENDENTS:

Wofford, Oral Roberts

Arkansas in the Great Eight, and new coach Tom Izzo appears to have lit a fire under the team. —STEVE KORNACKI

**Conference USA** If history repeats itself, the fledgling Conference USA, a blend of the best from the powerful Great Midwest and Metro conferences, is expected to get off to a great start in its inaugural postseason. The 11-member league has impeccable credentials:

- It is the only league in which all of its members have reached the semifinals of the NCAAs or NIT.
- Six league members have registered at least 18 NCAA Tournament victories.
- The ACC is the only other league to have all of its current coaches guide teams to the NCAA Tournament.

Cincinnati, which won all four Great Midwest Tournament titles, and Memphis met in the 1992 Midwest Regional Final in the GMC's first season. "We have managed to peak as a team at the right time," Cincinnati coach Bob Huggins said. "From the first day of practice, we stress the goal of being successful in postseason play, and the first step of that goal is to be successful in the conference tournament."

With star center Lorenzen Wright, Memphis coach Larry Finch should improve on his late-season record. Finch averaged more

than 20 victories in his first nine seasons but the Tigers dropped five of their last eight games in 1992-'93, five of nine in 1993-'94 and three of their last five in 1994-'95.

The best bets to join Cincinnati and Memphis in this year's NCAA field are Louisville and Tulane. Louisville coach Denny Crum has won all six times he's reached an NCAA regional final but has advanced that far just once—as the titlist in 1986—in the last 11 years.

Like Finch, Tulane coach Perry Clark has seen his team average more than 20 victories the previous four years despite late-season slumps. Tulane lost seven of its last 10 games in 1991-'92, five of seven in 1992-'93, five of 13 in 1993-'94 and seven of 15 in 1994-'95. That pattern could continue with both Cincinnati and Memphis on the schedule late this year.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Lorenzen Wright, Memphis. He ran out of gas last year, scoring more than 17 points just once in the Tigers' last 10 games.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Tulane. The Wave's due, although it doesn't have much of a track record to fall back on. Tulane was the only charter member of the Metro not to win a league tourney title.—MIKE DOUCHANT

**PAC-10** Keep these few things in mind when evaluating Arizona's chances. First, the Wildcats won the Preseason NIT, but only one of the past six Preseason NIT champs—Indiana in '92—has advanced beyond the Sweet 16 of the ensuing NCAA Tournament. Second, seeding is crucial to the Wildcats. In his 12 years in Tucson, coach Lute Olson has never won a first-round game as a No. 3 seed or lower.

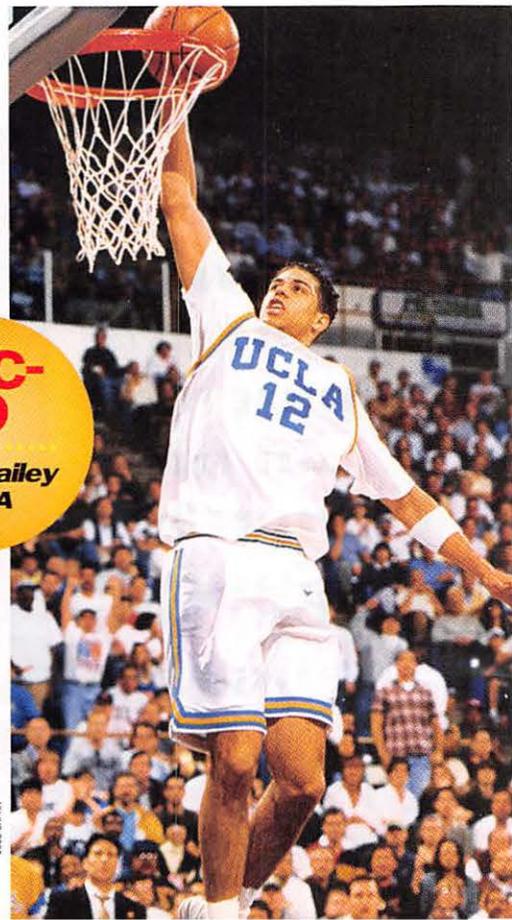
Defending champion UCLA also is fighting history. In the 19 years between UCLA's '75 and '95 titles, no champion which lost at least three starters made it out of the second round the next year. Also, the Bruins, led by Charles O'Bannon, Jelani McCoy and Toby Bailey, don't have a senior in their regular rotation.

Washington State's late-season schedule will make building March momentum difficult. The Cougars' final six games are against the Bay area, L.A. and Arizona schools—at least four potential losses. Cal has the talent to cause havoc but not the experience. Only one player, oft-injured center Al Grigsby, has ever experienced a March Madness victory.

Stanford's key to success is sharpshooting guard Dion Cross, who spreads defenses for Tim Young and Brevin Knight. Cross shot 48 percent from three-point range last year but only 38 percent in six games last March. Tim Young's back injury spells trouble, too.

A pair of late games to watch are Arizona's home dates on March 7 and 9 against

**PAC-10**  
**Toby Bailey**  
**UCLA**



Stanford and Cal, respectively. The Wildcats entered the season with just four losses in their last 116 games at the McKale Center, but the Cardinal and the Bears over three days should test that record.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Reggie Geary. If Arizona's defensive stopper-turned-point guard continues his solid play, watch out.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** California. Tons of raw talent, including freshman Shareef Abdur-Rahim, but can it be harvested?—*JON WILNER*

**SEC** Do you see that cloud hanging over Lexington, Ky.? It's not an NCAA investigation—it's burning incense. Kentucky coach Rick Pitino has his eyes closed, is sitting in a lotus position and is chanting, "There's no pressure on me to win a national championship, there's no pressure on me to win a national championship. . ." Yeah, right Rick.

As the best of the five SEC teams figuring to make the NCAA Tournament—Mississippi State, Arkansas, Auburn and Georgia are the others—the Wildcats finally have the bench to win it all. Kentucky has won four straight SEC tournaments and 12 consecutive league tourney games. In the last four seasons, the Wildcats have been to the Final Four once and two regional finals. Their four battle-tested seniors have been there, done some of that and now want to do the rest.

Arkansas hasn't exactly been a slouch in the NAAs, either. Razorbacks coach Nolan Richardson pooh-poohs the fact he's never won the SEC tournament. That's because his Hogs are the winningest team in the 1990s and have won 13 of their last 15 NCAA tourney games, resulting in a 1994 national title and a loss in the final last year to UCLA. Mississippi State will know its fate following a 7-game February that includes road games at Auburn, Oklahoma and Vandy, plus home dates with Arkansas and LSU. Vanderbilt's chances hinge on its road performance late against Georgia, Tennessee and Kentucky.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Dontaé Jones, Mississippi State. In last year's national junior college tournament, Jones averaged 33.7 points and 15.7 rebounds. The better the competition, the harder he plays.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Georgia. The Bulldogs have always been a sleeper team that didn't wake up until May. But not this year. With a new, aggressive style installed by first-year coach Tubby Smith, the athletic Bulldogs are barking up the right tree.—*RON HIGGINS*

**SWC** In Tom Penders' seven seasons at Texas, no other current Southwest Conference team has won an NCAA Tournament game. Texas Tech, SMU and Houston all made appearances and were quickly booted.

Texas reached six Tournaments, winning at least one game five times. But winning one and dropping the next, which the Longhorns did last year by routing Oregon State and then losing to Maryland, has become old. Penders, though, disputes the theory that Texas is at a

Tournament plateau. "There are a lot of strong programs that haven't gone as far as we have," he said. "The Syracuse and Purdues, the really strong, established programs, don't have nearly the success we've had the last seven years."

"Is Florida a better program than us because they went to the Final Four? No. They've only been to two Tournaments the past seven years. Look at Seton Hall. They got to the Final Four and then they disappeared. Georgia Tech had a great run. Every other year, they're knocked out early, once by us. They're a fine program, but they're not any better than us."

Clearly, Texas has been consistent, perhaps all it takes in the fading SWC. Despite four new starters and five new reserves off the bench, the Longhorns still seem like the SWC team most likely to make Tournament noise.

But that's not to say Texas is the league's best team. Texas Tech likely earns that nod, with a good balance of Darvin Ham and Tony Battie inside, Koy Smith outside and Jason Sasser in between. Houston might be the league's most talented team, but the Cougars might be too inconsistent, even with the multi-dimensional Tim Moore and Kirk Ford, to last long into March.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Reggie Freeman, Texas. The Longhorns regularly play 10 men, but Freeman is the most reliable offensive force and a ball-hawking defender.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Houston. Tim Moore, Galen Robinson and Lonzell Gowdy were ineligible early, but their absence may have helped Anthony Knox and Kenya Capers develop. If Moore gets hot, a tournament run is possible.—*JONATHAN FEIGEN*

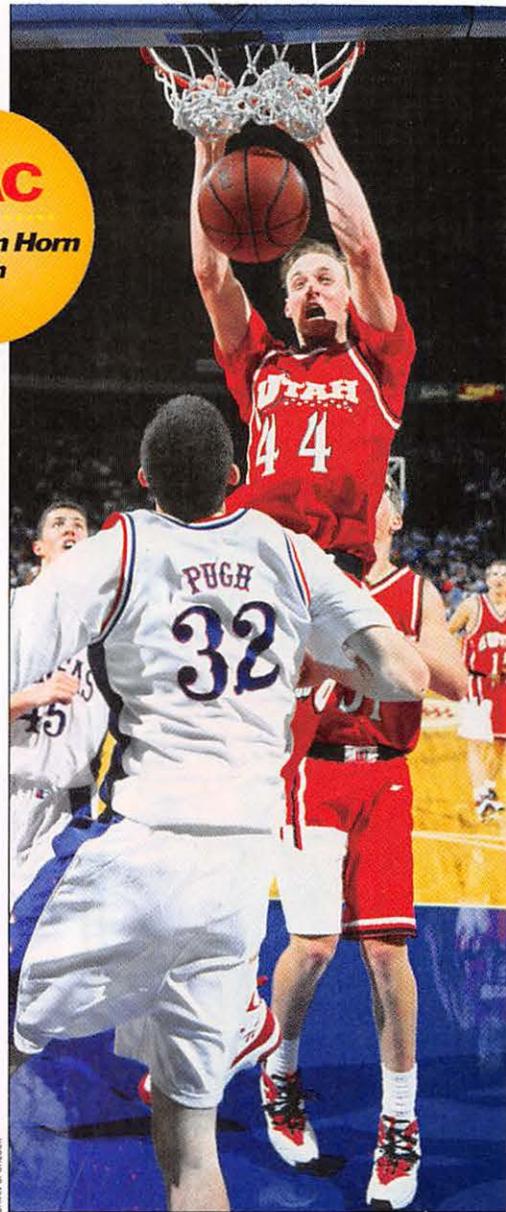
**WAC** Throughout the nonconference schedule, you could hear the whispers: "Try and get to Utah early, especially while Brandon Jessie is out." Playing Utah late in the season, at least with this unit, has usually meant a loss.

Utah was 8-1 last February, squeaking past Brigham Young for the conference title. Including the WAC tournament, the Utes were 11-1 from Feb. 1 to the beginning of the NAAs. The nucleus of Keith Van Horn and Brandon Jessie is back to duplicate those late-season numbers.

Jessie averaged 13 points a game from his swing guard spot in the final 12 games last season and was the perfect complement to Van Horn, who averaged 17 a game in the same span. When Van Horn was kept in check in a must-win game at BYU, Jessie became the primary threat and scored 21.

The Utes are the clear choice for an invitation, but New Mexico, Colorado State, Brigham Young, Hawaii and Fresno State all have a glimmer of hope. The Lobos have consistently been a February and March team under Dave Bliss. In 1993, they went 13-3 over

**WAC**  
**Keith Van Horn**  
**Utah**



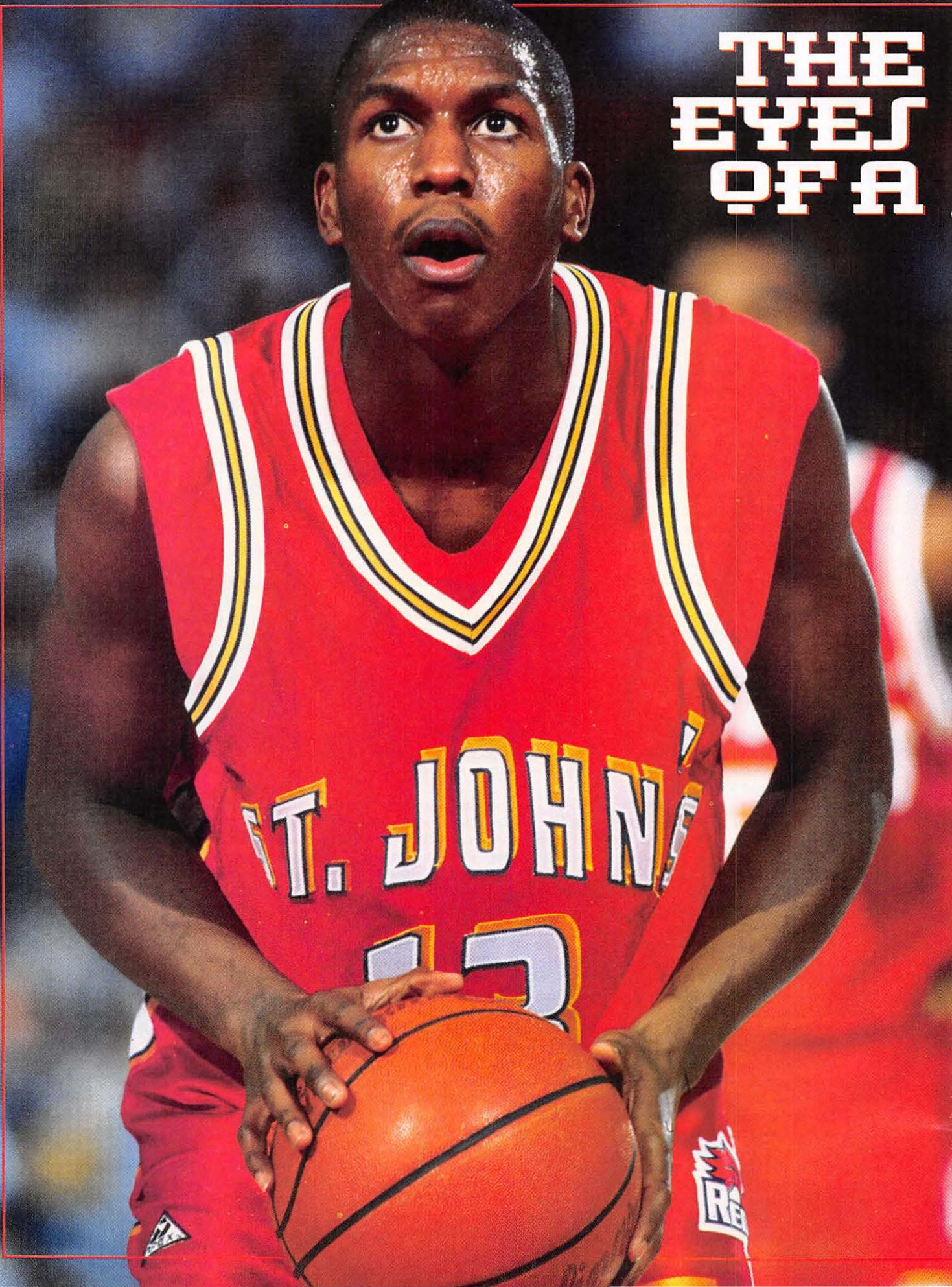
their final 16 WAC games and won the league tournament. In 1994, they won the regular season with a 7-2 record in February and March. Even though the Lobos finished .500 last season, they still managed to be a factor in February, winning five of their final six games to move from seventh to fourth place.

Colorado State made a late push last season, winning a pair of WAC tournament games. David Evans and Joe Vogel both stepped up late. BYU traditionally starts strong, only to fade later. Forward Kenneth Roberts and guard Randy Reid return from a team which lost three of its final five regular-season games, a first-round WAC tournament game and its NCAA Tournament opener.

**PLAYER TO WATCH:** Charles Smith, New Mexico. If the Lobos mature, keep an eye on their creative guard, who shot better than 50 percent in five of his final eight games last year and scored 16 points or more in four of his last five regular-season games.

**SLEEPER TEAM:** Hawaii. The Rainbows have reached the WAC tournament championship three times since 1990, winning it in 1994. Tes Whitlock, Anthony Harris and Alike Smith give Hawaii an experienced backcourt.—*ANDY KATZ CS*

# THE EYES OF A



# NATION

**T**hey rode donkeys. They came on foot. They packed themselves into beat-up buses. But they came. Thousands of them, traveling 20 miles to the Santo Domingo airport as if it were a religious shrine. And, for a day, that's what it was. When San Francisco Giants stars Felipe and Matty Alou and Juan Marichal returned to their native Dominican Republic following a heartbreaking seven-game loss to the New York Yankees in the 1962 World Series, their countrymen venerated them and celebrated the greatest accomplishment ever by Dominican ballplayers.

For a nation racked by poverty, a corrupt government and centuries of abuse by colonial interlopers, baseball was a source of pride that transcended pathetic per capita income levels and huge illiteracy rates. By playing in the World Series, the Alou brothers and Marichal had brought honor and hope to a country with staggering deficits of each.

Throughout the past four decades, successful Dominican major league players have continued to fuel the ambitions of every young boy who has ever fashioned a makeshift glove out of a milk carton or used a branch from a guasma tree as a bat. They are hailed as heroes and embrace their status as role models for fellow citizens, who see a chance for success buried deep beneath the dreary rubble of decaying neighborhoods and crushed dreams.

And so it is with Felipe Lopez, the 6-foot-5 sophomore guard from St. John's who emigrated to New York City from Santiago in 1989. Every time he steps onto a basketball court, he is playing not only for his school and its fans but for an entire nation. As the first Dominican with a chance at NBA stardom, Lopez is held in the same esteem as the three Giants who inspired a nation more than 30 years ago.

He is a pioneer, and it is largely because of him that young Dominicans are dribbling basketballs in the streets where they once played baseball. At the still tender age of 21, Lopez accepts his burden and celebrity willingly, realizing the importance of his accomplishments to the residents of the country he loves and the half-million Dominicans who have settled in New York.

"So many people have [placed] so much [of their] hopes on what I do," Lopez said.

## A Hero in the Dominican Republic, FELIPE LOPEZ Carries the Hopes Of More Than Just St. John's Fans

By **MICHAEL BRADLEY**

"They follow it so close—my career—that it makes you wonder. If you come into a basketball game and don't give all you have, you're going to have a lot of people disappointed in you. So, I try to stay focused on what I need to do to make people happy."

Lopez is an anomaly in an era when the allure of money and television has made athletes more selfish than ever. During one return visit to the Dominican Republic, Lopez finished a practice attended by hundreds on hand to see him and asked Dominican national coach Hector Baez for a table. "I got him one," Baez said, "and I looked up and saw him sitting behind it signing autographs for about 500 people."

Lopez's is a boyish charisma, manifested on the court by his dazzling assaults on the basket and off it by an ability to keep people laughing. "More than anything else, Felipe has a sense of grace, almost buoyancy, to him and that's part of his appeal," said recruiting analyst Tom Konchalski, who has known Lopez since the guard was a freshman at Rice High in Manhattan. "There's a lot of E.T. in him. Even if he didn't have a crumb, his spirit would still soar."

When Lopez returned to the Dominican Republic last summer, he, too, was welcomed at the airport by his countrymen. And instead of distancing himself from the adoring crowds who gathered around him during his stay, Lopez played the role of ambassador. He participated in pickup games all over Santiago to give Dominicans a chance to watch him. Afterward, he often found himself in the homes of strangers, talking about basketball and enjoying life in a country hanging on his every action.

"It's fun," Lopez said about his trips to the island. "A whole lot of people know who I am, even the old people who don't understand about basketball. I'm glad to know I've got people who really love me and are always looking out for me."

Like many nations around the world, the Dominican Republic is embracing basketball—with one big difference. Instead of being introduced to the sport by the NBA and its marketing apparatus, Dominicans are learning through Lopez. "We're finding a lot of Dominicans around 12 to 14 years old who are playing the game," Baez said. "Before Felipe, you didn't have that."

"I think he understands what his role is," said Anthony Lopez, Felipe's older brother and a promotions manager for adidas America. "It's not new for him anymore. He's been in the spotlight since he was in high school, and he's fortunate to have people around him who can help him with it. It's not an obligation or a duty, but Felipe is a role model. Whether he believes it or not, he is a role model."

**L**opez appeared on few magazine covers prior to this season, quite a departure from 1994-'95 when he was more popular than a supermodel. To the national media, Lopez's debut was something of a disappointment, even though he led St. John's in scoring (17.8) and was second in rebounding (5.7) and assists (2.8). Lopez tied Chris Mullin's school record for points by a freshman (498), scored 20 or more in 11 games and smoked Syracuse for 35 points in the Carrier Dome. But St. John's finished 14-14, and the critics blamed Lopez.

"If he hadn't received all the notoriety or had all the expectations put on him, you would have been saying, 'Did you hear about that freshman at St. John's?'" said Ed De La Rosa, a Fordham assistant who has been an assistant coach on the Dominican national team. "He was a young kid asked to get the program back on its feet and headed in the right direction."

Because Lopez didn't lift the team to the Final Four or even the NCAA Tournament, he was considered a disappointment. A first-round NIT loss to South Florida didn't help. At a time when blue-chip recruits arrive on campus with thicker scrapbooks than most college seniors had 20 years ago,

## THE EYES OF A NATION

fans expect instant stardom. They don't want to hear about acclimation periods. That's what high school was for.

Red Storm faithful felt the same way about Lopez. Forget that his lanky frame needed some armor or that he had to work on integrating his substantial skills into more of a team concept. Lopez was the savior, a local kid who stayed home and would lead St. John's back to the glory days of the mid-1980s. When he didn't average 30 a game, some considered him a bust.

"In a sense, they never gave me time to understand the game and grow as a freshman in college," Lopez said. "There was a point where I didn't enjoy last year. We went through a [six-game] losing streak, and things weren't going the right way. Then the media started cutting up everything. It was hard."

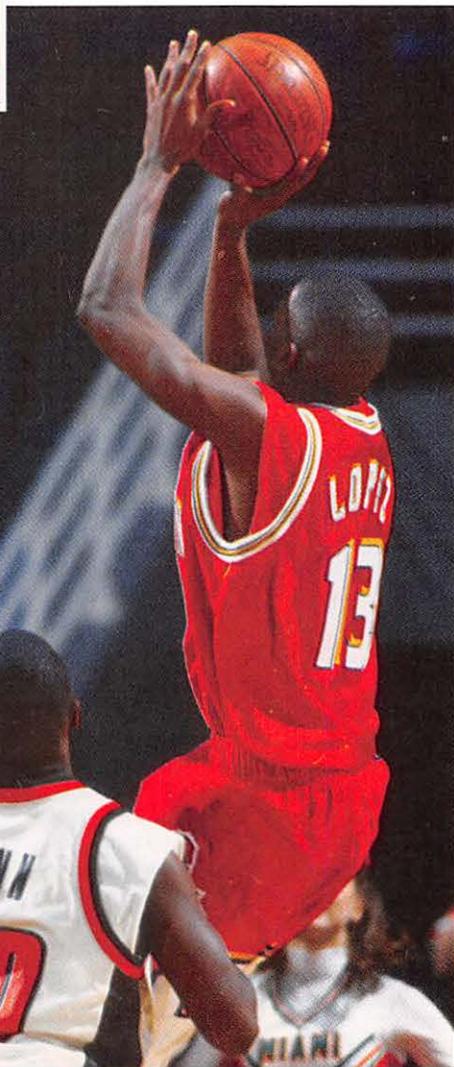


The Hispanic community hangs on Lopez's every performance, as does, ultimately, coach Brian Mahoney (above).

Lopez may have had his detractors, but it would have been difficult to find a Dominican or, for that matter, an Hispanic in New York who was dissatisfied. Since there have been precious few Latin Americans who have thrived in college basketball, much less made it to the NBA, Lopez's accomplishments were celebrated by the Hispanic community, and his potential for future success remained a beacon of hope. Since Lopez continues to embrace his Dominican roots, he endears himself to the Hispanic community further. He still prefers to speak Spanish, lists merengue as his favorite music and Vinicio Munoz, a basketball star in Santiago, as his favorite professional athlete.

"He's Hispanic and proud of it," De La Rosa said. "Some Hispanics may be intimidated by [English-speaking] people, but Felipe doesn't worry about that. He wants it to be known that he is from the Dominican Republic."

Though the Dominican Republic—about the size of New Hampshire and Vermont combined—has a cultural history that includes the first city, cathedral and university in the Americas, it remains an impoverished country. About 30 percent of the population is unem-



ployed, with another 50 percent underemployed. The economy, once tied almost completely to sugar cane, is now dependent upon tourism and mining, with most major corporate concerns in the country foreign-owned.

It's easy to understand why a sporting hero would captivate the country's residents. Since the Dominicans see few opportunities in the business world, they dream of success in athletics. For years, that has meant only baseball, and several Dominicans, including the Aloys, Marichal, Rico Carty and Cesar Cedeno, have become major league stars. Today, Jose Rijo, Manny Ramirez, Melido Perez, Tony Fernandez, Luis Polonia, Juan Guzman and Geronimo Berroa are among the top Dominicans in the majors.

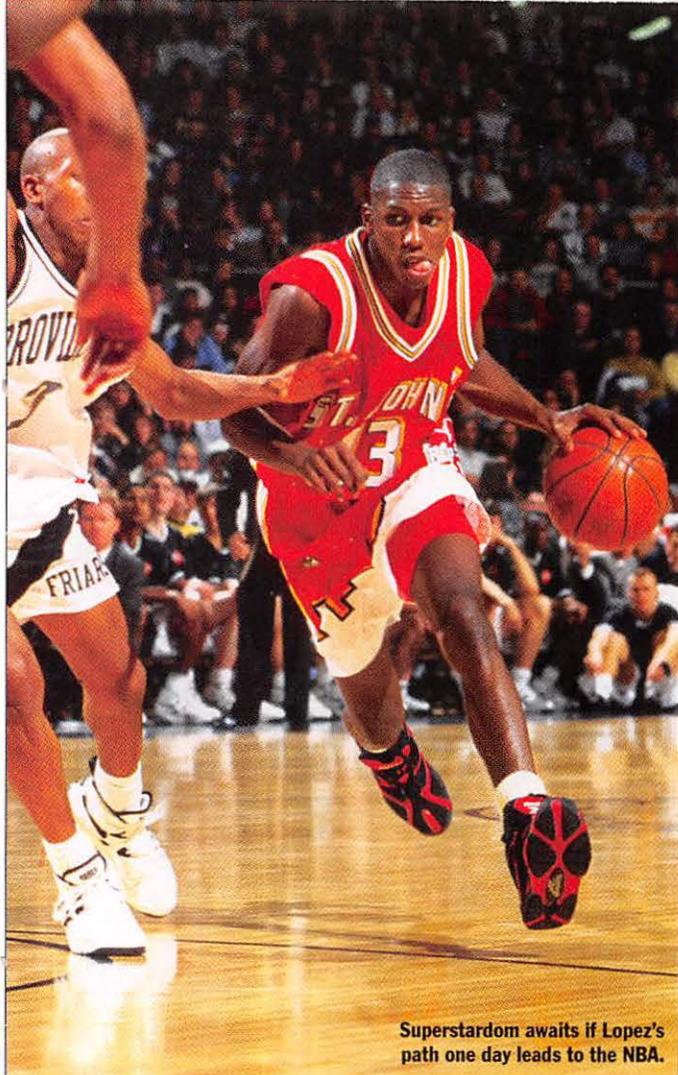
Lopez represents the first real NBA hope for his nation. Tito Horford, the only Dominican ever to play in the league, had a nondescript three-year career with Milwaukee and Washington. Rolando Blackman (born in Panama) and Butch Lee (Puerto Rico) represent the zeniths of Hispanic NBA success—and each of them was more New Yorker than Latin American.

"Baseball remains the number one sport, but Dominicans are learning that they can go to the United States and get an education through basketball," said Clemson Smith Muniz, a New York broadcaster who was born in Puerto Rico. "But [Hispanics] still need a transcendental figure to push the sport to the next step. We watch Felipe with apprehension because we know it's a step-by-step process. He's made it this far, but will he take the next step?"

**B**ecause the Santiago neighborhood where Lopez and his two brothers and sister grew up was close to a basketball court and a few miles from the nearest baseball field, the family gravitated toward basketball, though Felipe's father, Luis Felipe, had been an amateur baseball player. Felipe was dribbling a ball and shooting baskets through a hoop made from a bicycle tire rim by the age of 5. "We'd get home from school, get changed and be on the court in two minutes," Anthony Lopez said.

When Felipe suffered a bloodied nose in a baseball game as a 12 year old, he ended his two-sport playing days. Lopez was always a good basketball player, but he didn't blossom into a star until after he had migrated to the United States in the late 1980s. Because American emigration laws prohibited a wholesale influx of family members without any economic stability in this country, the family moved north piecemeal, beginning with his father's arrival in New York in the late 1970s. Anthony came up with his mother, Carmen, in 1986, followed three years later by Felipe and his sister, Sayonara. When oldest brother Anderson arrived in 1992, the family was complete.

"Our father used to go back and forth between America and the Dominican Republic about twice a year to spend some time with



Superstardom awaits if Lopez's path one day leads to the NBA.

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

His decision to attend St. John's thrilled New Yorkers and was even more pleasing to Lopez's fans in the Dominican community, who were excited to know they could follow him at close range for a few more years. In the Washington Heights section of the Bronx, a largely Dominican and Hispanic enclave where Spanish is the official language and the throbbing rhythms of merengue provide the soundtrack, kids wear St. John's jerseys with Lopez's number 13 and dream of college scholarships and the NBA. Basketball remains in its infancy there, but it is growing in popularity, thanks to cable TV and Lopez.

"When we played at Providence last year, 300 people from Washington Heights went up to watch the game," Red Storm coach Brian Mahoney said. Dominicans are showing up—albeit slowly, thanks to incomplete marketing efforts by the school—at St. John's Alumni Hall and venerable Madison Square Garden to watch Lopez.

Playing at St. John's also allowed him to remain close to his family and seek its counsel during the difficult freshman season. It was a reciprocal arrangement. When Anthony meets people in his role as an adidas representative, Felipe's name is the one he proudly mentions first. "Introducing myself as Felipe's brother means more than saying I'm Anthony Lopez," he said. "Some people say I might lose my identity doing that, but I don't see it that way. There are only two brothers of Felipe, and I'm one of them."

Lopez's legend has been tracked just as intently in the Dominican Republic, and his play in international competition has helped feed it. His first game with the Dominican national team came in the summer of 1993—just after his junior year at Rice—in the zone qualifying tournament for the '94 World Championships in Toronto. Playing against a team of CBA all-stars, Lopez scored 28 points in 29 minutes, shooting 10-for-18 from the field in a 102-99 loss. He averaged 18.0 points and 3.3 steals for the tournament.

"Throughout the whole country, he's thought of as a guy who can't miss," Baez said. "There's no doubt about it. We think he will be an NBA great. The whole country is praying that he will. He can do wonders for the country by getting to the NBA. It will give people something to look up to."

Although many Dominican immigrants have fashioned good lives for themselves in New York by operating bodegas—mom-and-pop grocery stores—and have established a solid middle class, they have precious few role models despite their growing influence among the estimated three million Hispanics in New York. Lopez has the chance to play a big role in that regard.

One person trying to emulate Lopez is Ricardo Greer, an 18-year-old junior at Cheshire Academy in Connecticut and one of the better high school players on the East Coast. Greer transferred to Cheshire from George Washington High in Washington Heights and has known Lopez for four years. Every step Lopez takes on the road to the NBA is another boost for Greer, a 6-5, 221-pound forward with similar aspirations.

"Everybody in my neighborhood wants to be a basketball player now because of Felipe," Greer said. "I see Felipe and think that if I work hard, I can be like him. If I can do it, then it will open even more doors for the community."

**A**fter a year of deferring to since-departed leader James Scott, Lopez is clearly ready to take charge. He is stronger at 185 pounds, having added 15 pounds of muscle, and understands that he can't do whatever he wants on the basketball court, as he did in high school. He must wait for the right opportunity. Lopez also has learned to be a little more selfless away from the court when it comes to the media.

"There's a little more time for me to relax and focus and be proud of myself and work on my game without people pounding on me and asking for interviews all the time," Lopez said. "Last year, sometimes I didn't have time for myself to work on my game. Now that a lot of people have backed off, it will give me some time to understand what the game's all about and what phases I have to work on."

"As you get wiser, you understand that better. I'm not a freshman anymore. I'm a sophomore. I saw what I went through last year and the way people talked about me. This is [a different] year and you want to make things happen in a different way. The only way you can do it is by being concerned about what you have to do."

Lest anyone think that his attempts to downplay the media focus will ruin Lopez's relationship with the Dominican community, think again. As long as he bounces a basketball, Lopez will be a national treasure. And should he ever reach stardom in the NBA, the skinny kid from Santiago will join the Alou brothers and Marichal on the Dominican Republic's list of venerable sports heroes.

"Basketball is picking up big time in the Dominican Republic," Lopez said. "A lot of people are playing basketball instead of baseball. I'm a big part of that."

And getting bigger. **CS**

*Michael Bradley is a free-lance writer based in Philadelphia.*

the family," Anthony said. "When we all got together in New York, it was definitely one of the greatest feelings. We really celebrated."

Lopez first gained notice on the court as an eighth-grader playing for the junior team of the Gauchos, a nationally known New York-based AAU club that in the past has featured such NBA stars as Kenny Anderson, Jamal Mashburn, Mark Jackson and John Salley. But a growth spurt before his freshman season at Rice was his true catalyst to renown.

All of a sudden, Lopez was a 6-4 player with point guard skills, not exactly your typical ninth-grader. Lopez averaged nearly 19 points a game as a freshman and made all-city his sophomore year, when Rice lost in the city title game to Bishop Loughlin. It was clearly the start of something big. "He had one of the finest high school careers in New York City history," Konchalski said.

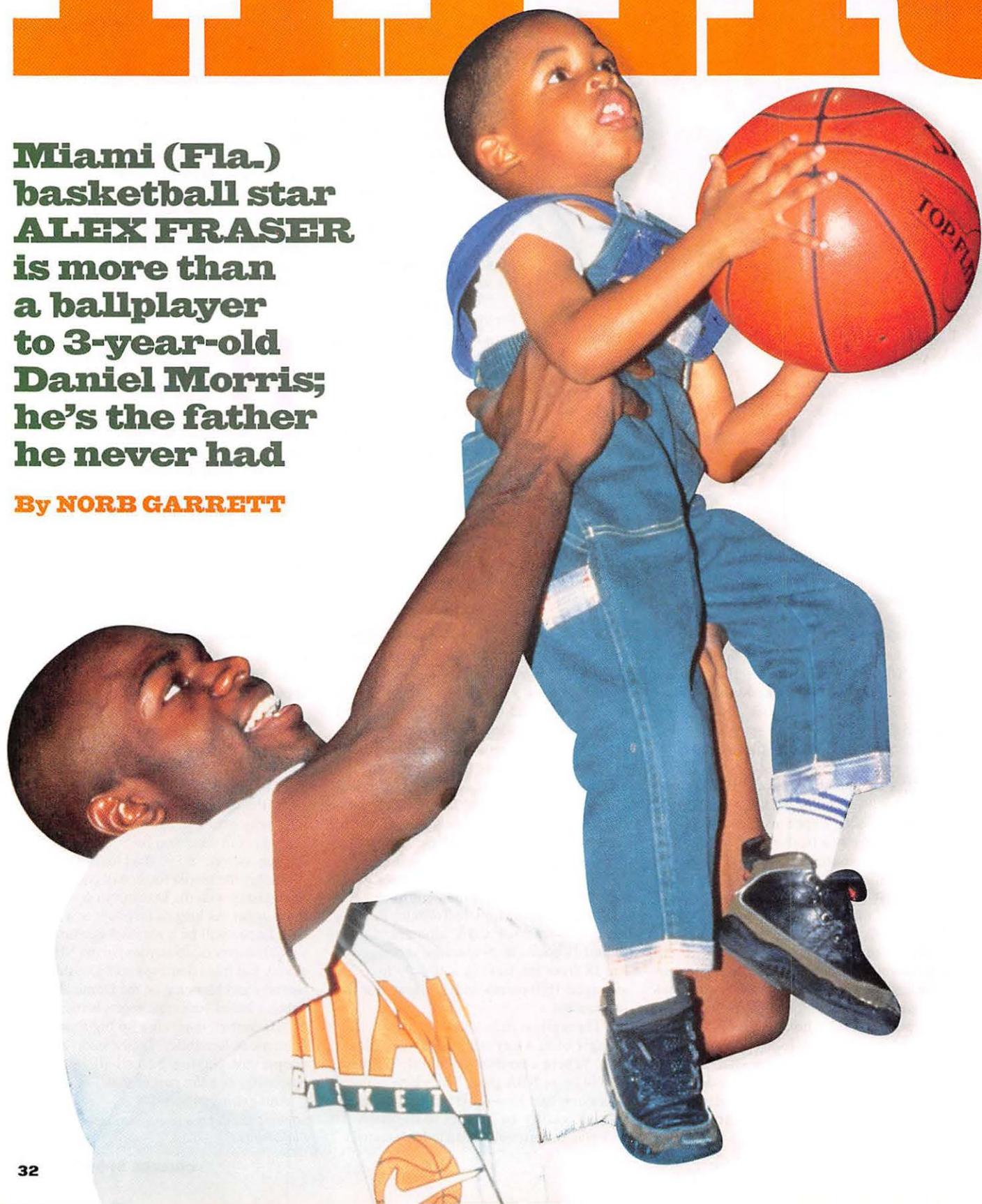
By the time Lopez was done at Rice, he had scored 2,486 points—fifth-highest in state history—and led his school to the 1994 city and state championships by averaging 26.8 points, 10.2 rebounds and 2.4 steals. He was the '94 *USA Today* Player of the Year, the MVP of that season's McDonald's All-America game and the Magic Johnson Roundball Classic and was even reportedly offered \$400,000 a year to play professionally in Spain.

**EVERYDAY**

# FAATHER

**Miami (Fla.)  
basketball star  
ALEX FRASER  
is more than  
a ballplayer  
to 3-year-old  
Daniel Morris;  
he's the father  
he never had**

**By NORB GARRETT**



# O

**A**s a member of the University of Miami men's basketball team, Alex Fraser faces the usual challenges in the classroom and on the court. He has tests to pass, shots to sink, a scholarship to justify. He has a girlfriend, a roommate, a pet snake and a future to ponder.

At first glance, Fraser seems like the perfect student-athlete poster boy of the '90s. But to 3-year-old Daniel Morris and his mother, Carmen, Fraser is anything but your typical college kid. To them, Fraser is part hero, part savior, part family. Unlike most college students, Fraser has chosen to become more than just another player in the game of life; he's now a surrogate father to little Daniel—a role that is changing the lives of everyone associated for the better.

## Fraser first met Daniel

and Carmen at the Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in south Miami one Sunday a year ago. As Fraser stood in the church pew with Hurricanes basketball coach Leonard Hamilton, he spotted the young boy holding his mother's hand and was drawn to the child's cheerful face and demeanor.

"I just noticed him standing there, and I thought how much he reminded me of myself," said Fraser, who was in attendance that Sunday as Hamilton's guest for the first time at Bethel Missionary. "When I was growing up, my mother was everything to me, too, because my father wasn't around, either."

As the service came to a close, the minister asked the congregation to look within themselves to provide strength and direction for those children assembled that day who were being raised by single mothers.

Again, Fraser looked at the little boy, but despite feeling an undeniable urge to come forward and volunteer his support, his shy nature won out. He remained in the pew until most of the congregation had departed before asking Hamilton, who knew Daniel's mother, to find out if anyone had offered to be Daniel's stand-in father. Hamilton asked her and told her about Fraser and his intentions, and after learning of the similarities between Fraser and Daniel, she was sold.

"[Alex] and Daniel had very much the same experiences, the difference being that Alex is at the adult end of the spectrum and

Daniel is at the beginning," Morris said. "I am sorry [Daniel's] dad is not there, and I do hope it doesn't disrupt his life. But I also realize the importance of a strong male role model in his life."

## The lack of that kind of

leadership in his own life is one reason Fraser chose to step forward that morning in church. Except for the four years he lived with his father, Guy Fraser, in the mid-'80s, Fraser was raised by his mother, Irma. His generosity, while surprising in its scope, is hardly anything new to his mother. As a youngster, Fraser was quite popular with neighborhood senior citizens because he always was willing to help them cart groceries back to their houses.

"I'm extremely proud of him," Irma said. "I always worried about him growing up without a father, but now that I see him doing this with Daniel, it makes me feel good."

Fraser has proven that strong guidance and constant love often can overcome that disadvantage. "At first, I wanted to [help Daniel] because I thought it would do him some good," said Fraser, who moved to Miami with his parents from Kingston, Jamaica at the age of 2 and has two older brothers who remain in Jamaica. "But the more time I spend with him, the more I realize it's good for me, too."

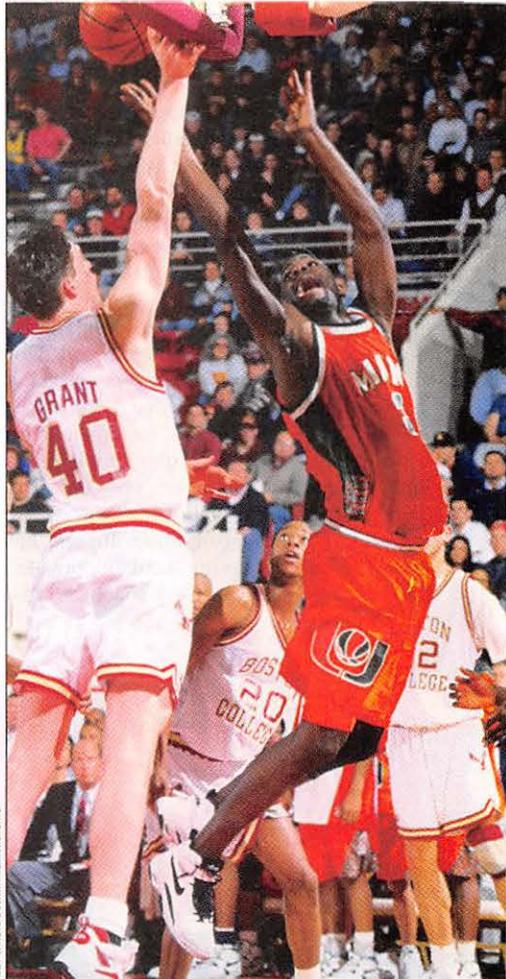
Since the day they first met, Fraser and Daniel have been together almost every other weekend and the two have become interchangeable parts in each other's family. Daniel, no surprise, has become a big Hurricanes fan, and Fraser and roommate Kevin Norris regularly include him in casual shoot-arounds on Miami's home court. The two spend most of their time talking, going to the mall or to the movies. Sometimes Fraser picks up Daniel from drum lessons before heading out for a bite to eat or games in a park.

"[Alex] and Daniel have basically fallen in love—they're very close," said Carmen, who moved with her family to Miami from Jamaica as an 11-year-old. "Daniel also fell in love with basketball, so now when he sees anybody playing basketball, all he can think about is Alex."

While the time spent with Daniel decreases somewhat during the basketball season, Fraser remains in contact. The two speak on the phone regularly, and it was during one of the phone calls with Daniel that the importance of his association was brought directly home.

"One night several months ago, we were just talking about school and about when we were going to get together again," Fraser said, "and as we were saying goodbye, Daniel said, 'I love you, Alex,' and it really hit me. It made me realize how much this means to him and me."

It's a pretty heavy lesson for a 3 year old, not to mention a college student. "It is truly remarkable because in this day and age when all you see on the news are young men going out and shooting up, crashing their cars or ending up in jail or on drugs, it's just



Alex Fraser's on-court actions are only part of his on-going success story.

truly refreshing to see a young man, a young black man, who has made a different choice," Carmen said.

## For Fraser, the choice

was easy. Not only did he recognize himself in Daniel but he also saw a lot of his mom in Carmen. Daniel and Fraser's relationship has proven to be valuable not just for themselves but for each other's mother, too. The moms share the common burden of being single, working parents, and Irma and Carmen talk regularly about their sons, church and, interestingly, Jamaica. After several discussions included cross-references of friends and relatives in Kingston, the two made some calls to find out just who knows whom back home. As it turns out, the families might be related. Carmen's maiden name is Morris, as is Irma's. A planned group visit to Jamaica may provide an ironic answer.

"It's wild to think that through all this we might be related," Fraser said. "I mean, we might never have even met had I not attended church that day."

Even more important, though, is that through one person's actions, so many lives will be affected. "I hope it serves as a good example to those deadbeat fathers and mature athletes who get caught up in the sweetness of their success and forget about the communities from which they came," Carmen said. "I know it's touched my heart and my son's as well." **CS**

If Herb Sendek had a nickname, it would probably be "Mr. Perfect." The Miami (Ohio) University basketball coach earned straight As in high school and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Carnegie Mellon University. His wife, Melanie, calls him "a girl's dream"—moral, proper, caring. After games, he bypasses beers with the boys (he doesn't drink) so he can get home to Melanie and their daughter, Kristin, 2. His players marvel at his intelligence and knowledge of the game.

"He knows everything," freshman guard Rob Mestas said. "You don't understand how smart he is; he makes up words and they put them in the dictionary."

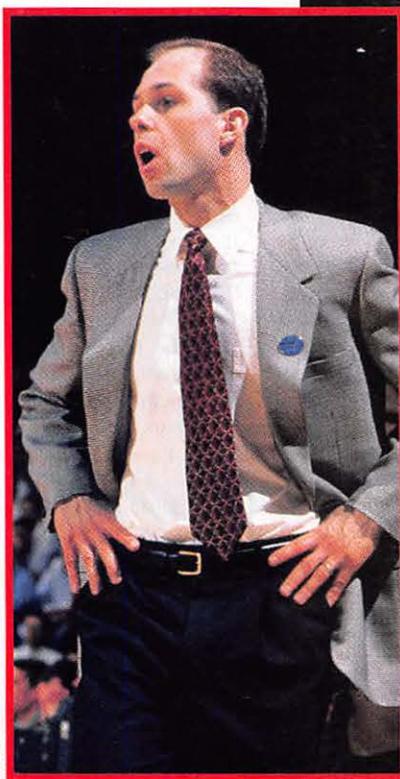
Heck, the only bad thing anyone has to say about this loving husband, devoted father and hard-working coach is that

Sendek, 33, and Davis, a 21-year-old junior, refused to lose last season, leading the Redskins to a MAC regular-season championship and a win over then-No. 15 Arizona in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, where Sendek was the youngest coach in the field. Davis scored a team-high 24 points and had 15 rebounds against the Wildcats. His performance impressed fans as well as players. "Damn, that guy with the hair . . . he can play," Arizona center Joe Blair said afterward.

That guy with the hair. Despite Davis' dominant play, his pro potential and his on-and off-the-court leadership, he will forever be remembered as that guy with the hair. "That dreadlocks kid, is he still playing?" was the first question a curious alumnus asked as he wandered into a Redskins practice early this season.

# MIAMI NICE

**THE SPOTLIGHT IS FINALLY FINDING THE OTHER MIAMI THANKS TO AN NBA PROSPECT AND A COACH ON THE RISE** By **SUSAN VINELLA**



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

The controlled intensity of coach Herb Sendek (left) and the flashy fire of Devin Davis (42) have helped turn the Redskins into giant-killers.

he doesn't enjoy winning enough.

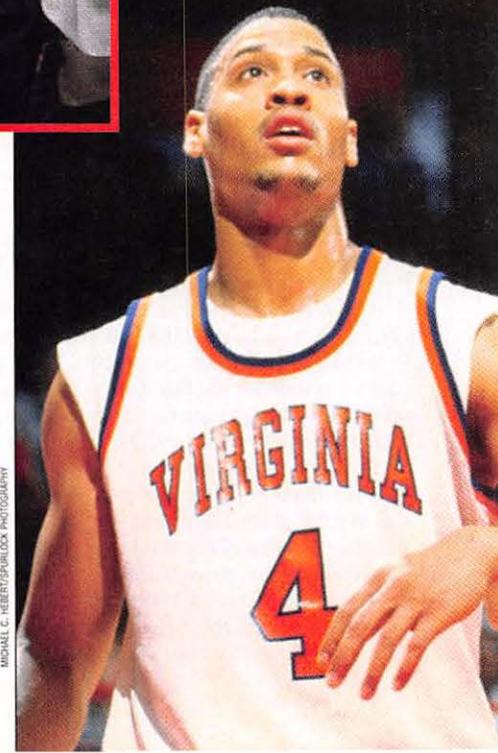
If Miami star Devin Davis had a nickname, it would probably be "Mr. Passion." The 6-foot-7, 215-pound forward plays basketball as much with his heart as with his head. He attacks life, including academics, the same way. "If you go against Devin in anything, you know you're going to have the battle of your life," Miami assistant coach Charles Coles said.

Together, Mr. Perfect and Mr. Passion have put Miami University basketball in the national spotlight. The coach and his player have taken an often overlooked Mid-American Conference team and made it a winner. "They're both very intense competitors," said assistant coach Brian Blaney, son of Seton Hall head coach George Blaney. "They both hate to lose; they won't accept it."

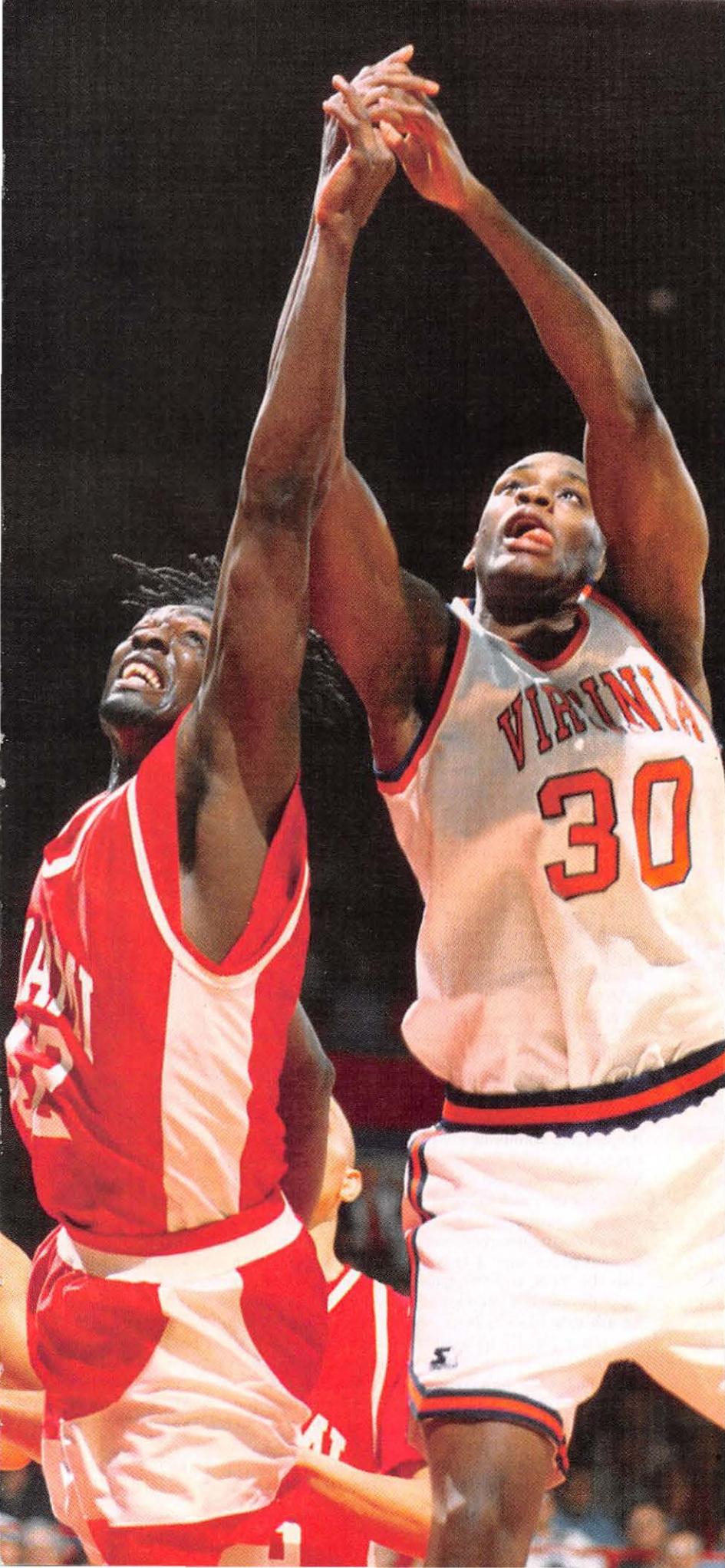
Davis, of course, is much more than some guy with dreadlocks. And the Miami University Redskins are much more than some team in the mediocre MAC. Though they lost two of their top players to graduation last year—forward Jamie Mahaffey and point guard Derrick Cross—their depth this season will compensate for their youth. Seven players on the 15-man roster are new, including five freshmen. But Sendek noticed right away that the newcomers weren't far behind the veterans.

"Sometimes, you have a team where your first five or six players are able to dominate the second five or six players," Sendek said. "That's not the case with this group."

Still, the coach refuses to highlight or tout any one player, instead emphasizing winning as a team effort. Sendek stresses



MICHAEL C. HEBERT/SHUTTERSTOCK PHOTOGRAPHY



that Miami's success goes far beyond the sole efforts of Davis or himself. But certainly, that's where it begins.

**S**itting in his tiny, no-frills office, legs crossed, hands clasped, body leaned forward, Sendek seems more like a priest ready to hear confession than a coach ready to talk basketball. His gaze is firm but warm; his voice soothing and calm. He immediately puts you at ease. If you had any sins to confess, Sendek seems like the perfect guy to hear them.

But sins aren't Sendek's focus; basketball is. And Sendek, players and coaches say, knows enough about the latter to fill a bible. A basketball bible, that is.

"The one word that everyone uses to describe him is meticulous," Blaney said. "And he uses it to describe himself. He likes that and takes pride in being extremely detailed and organized and thorough in everything he does, especially [coaching] his team. He studies great coaches; he studies championship teams."

Studying has always been a strength of Sendek's. He graduated No. 1 in his class at Penn Hills High School in suburban Pittsburgh with a perfect 4.0 average. At Carnegie Mellon, he again was No. 1, earning a near-perfect 3.95 G.P.A. in industrial management, a major he describes as "business with a lot of math."

"That's all he did when he went to school—study," said Melanie, who met and married Herb after college.

Sendek didn't change much when he became an assistant coach under Rick Pitino, first at Providence from 1985-'89 and then at Kentucky from '89-'93. "All he would do is watch tape," Pitino said. "I've never had anyone in our organization . . . that's had the work ethic of Herb. It's on a level all his own."

Sendek watched the Kentucky team he helped construct as the team's recruiting coordinator advance to the 1993 Final Four. His effectiveness as a top recruiter continued when he arrived at Miami in '93—among the talent he has attracted are Mestas, Minnesota's 1995 Mr. Basketball, and Damon Frierson, a 6-4 freshman forward who was Indiana's Mr. Basketball last year.

Sendek has long been recognized as a top recruiter, but he'll pass on taking much credit for his recruiting ability. "That type of recognition is in part what organizational behaviorists label attribution theory," said Sendek, sounding more like a professor than a basketball coach. "In other words, somebody has to get the credit or the blame in an organization. But the truth of the matter is that how successful or unsuccessful one is in recruiting is usually the function of a) the product, the institution, the program and b) the collective team effort of many people. To give disproportionate credit or blame to any one person is an oversimplification of the process."

Or in layman's terms, "As soon as you meet him," Pitino said, "you know he's

# MIAMI NICE

someone you want your son to play for."

That's how Mestas' mother, Janet, felt when she met Sendek. "He seemed like he really cared about the players." She said even now that her son is at Miami, Sendek keeps in touch. "He writes me [handwritten] notes and tells me how good Robert's doing in school; I like that."

Perhaps Sendek's biggest recruiting coup so far is Davis—although it didn't look that way at the time. As a senior at Miami, Fla., High, few college coaches were interested in Davis because he had difficulty passing his SAT and "he's two inches too small for a post man," said his high school coach Marcos "Shakey" Rodriguez, now the head coach at Florida International. He also said "the hair" didn't help Davis' appeal.

But Sendek saw in Davis what Rodriguez did and brought him to Oxford. "Devin is not the most gifted athlete in the world but there is no one in America that has a heart the size that Devin has or is as relentless and will play as hard as Devin," Rodriguez said. "He's making an awful lot of people feel sick to their stomach in the southeastern U.S. now because they didn't bother to recruit this man."

What may be even more remarkable than Davis' arrival at Miami's Oxford, Ohio, campus is his longevity there. Davis openly admits that the only reason he chose Miami is

that his high school friend and teammate Pancho Farquharson chose it, too. But after just one year, Farquharson dropped out, leaving Davis alone in a small town where many people looked upon him with bewilderment and even disdain.

"Oxford's so conservative," said Jermaine Henderson, a junior guard at Miami and one of Davis' best friends. "It's a very prestigious university and a 6-7 guy with dreadlocks playing basketball—it wasn't a fit at first."

Redskins center Kevin Beard said Davis thought of leaving with Farquharson but his friendship with Henderson helped keep him at Miami. "He and Jermaine [became] like brothers; that's one of the main reasons he stayed," Beard said.

The other is that Davis is not a quitter. "He understood that Pancho had to do what was in his best interest, and Devin had to do what was in his best interest," Sendek said. "And he never let that interfere or affect his performance or his attitude."

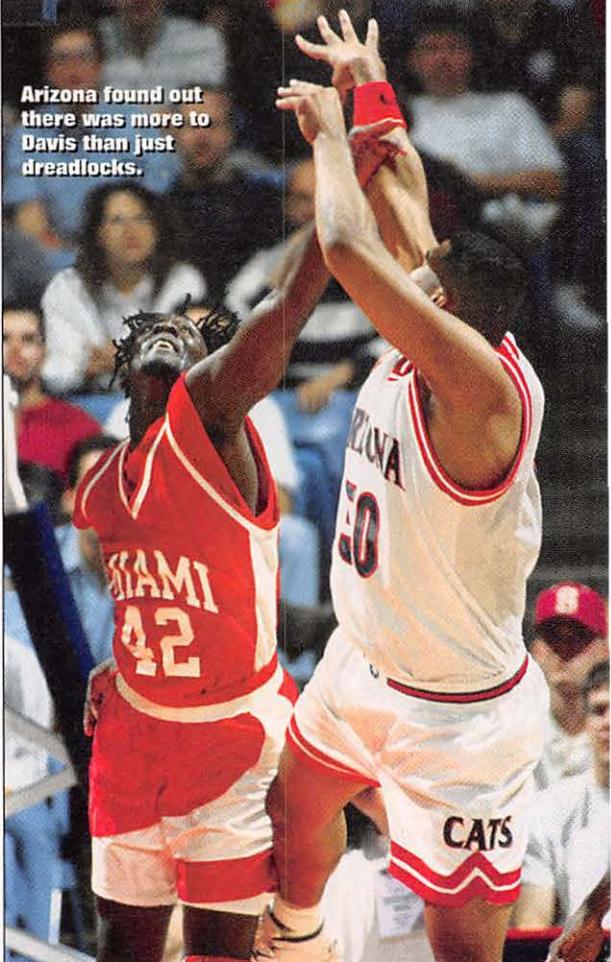
Davis' attitude, although off-putting and brash at times, is what sparks both him and his team. His teammates respect and admire him for his loud leadership. They aren't bothered if Davis gets in their face, as he did with Mahaffey during the Arizona game last year. They don't mind if he yells at them to stop messing around with hot-dog shots during warm-ups and tells them instead to practice things that will help the team.

"Just like Coach Sendek is always on everything, so is Devin," Henderson said. "I think that's one of the main reasons why we've been successful since [Devin's] been here; there are no easy things."

Davis said it's not easy adapting to life in ho-hum Oxford where "the biggest crime might be a bike being stolen." After growing up in a big city, he admits he's still not crazy about the quiet, leafy campus because "there's really not too much to do." To entertain themselves, he and Henderson frequently hole up in their room, load a movie into the VCR and "pretend we're the movie stars." One of his favorite films is *Boyz in the Hood*, perhaps because it reminds him of where he's been and how far he's come.

"Coming up, we both didn't enjoy many luxuries, and we reflected on that plenty of nights," said Henderson, who grew up in Columbus, Ohio.

Arizona found out there was more to Davis than just dreadlocks.



MICHAEL C. HEERTY/PHOTOGRAPHY

"We're kind of like, 'Man, we're so happy to be in this position.' Way back when, we never thought it could get this good for us."

Sendek said he counts his blessings daily, too. Though several schools tried to lure him to their campuses last year, most notably UNLV, he opted to stay. Asked what his dream job would be—with another strong finish by the Redskins this year, a prime opportunity could be his—Sendek prefers not to speculate. "My goals are much more immediate," he said. "I don't sit back and think about where I want to be in 10 years. I'm consumed with what I'm doing today."

On this particular day at practice, Sendek is consumed with his team's intensity—or lack of it. After watching his starting five get outplayed by his second five, Sendek calls an impromptu team meeting in the locker room; scolding his players in public is not his style.

When the team returns to the court 10 minutes later, Sendek is calm but clearly unhappy. Instead of resuming his stance on the court, he sits in the stands, seven rows up. As his players move into action, he leans back and wipes his brow. Today, things are not perfect for Mr. Perfect.

"I'm sorry we didn't have a good practice," he says later before heading to his office to contemplate why.

His players, however, aren't worried. They know by tomorrow Mr. Perfect will have a solution. And Mr. Passion will be at the heart of it. **CS**

Susan Vinella is a sportswriter for the Dayton (Ohio) Daily News.

## MAGIC RICK

If history serves as precedent, there may be no three assistant coaches more perfectly positioned to step

into Division I head coaching jobs than Kentucky assistants Jim O'Brien, Winston Bennett and Delray Brooks.

UK coach Rick Pitino sends assistant coaches, like Miami's Herb Sendek, on to head coaching jobs with amazing regularity. In his 16 seasons as a head coach at Boston University, Providence, Kentucky and with the New York Knicks, 10 former Pitino assistants have advanced to Division I head coaching positions. They are:

COACH	SCHOOL(S)	YRS. AT SCHOOL
BILLY DONOVAN	Marshall	1994-present
JIM O'BRIEN	Kentucky ass't. Dayton	1994-present 1990-'94
HERB SENDEK	Miami (Ohio)	1993-present
TUBBY SMITH	Georgia Tulsa	1995-present 1991-'95
RALPH WILLARD	Pittsburgh Western Kentucky	1994-present 1990-'94
STU JACKSON	Wisconsin New York Knicks	1992-'94 1990
BOB BROWN	Boston U. Southern Maine	1990-'94 1987-'90
JOHN KUESTER	George Washington Boston University	1985-'90 1983-'85
GORDON CHIESA	Providence	1987-'88
BILL BURKE	Loyola (Md.)	1981-'82

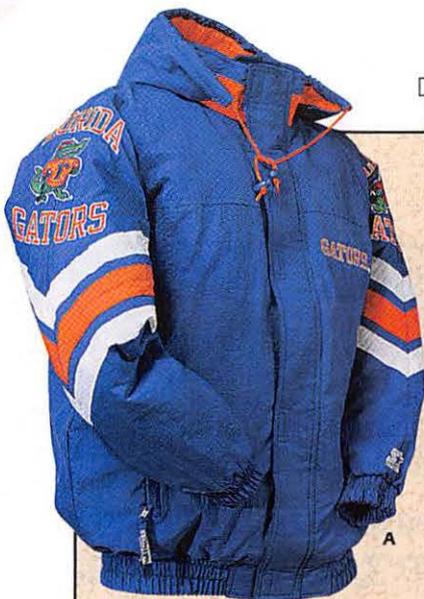
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Item# DEK .....XXL .....\$134.99



B



C

### B. NCAA AUTHENTIC BASEBALL CAP by Pro Line

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Most NCAA and NFL teams available.

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Item# CTP



D

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Most NCAA, NFL, NHL and MLB teams available.

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Item# DLS



E

### E. POLARIS WIND TOP by Starter

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F

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# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Gone But Not Forgotten, Small-Town Iowa Prep Star **RAEF LAFRENTZ** Has Made a Big Impression at Kansas

By **MARK BLAUDSCHUN**



The recruitment of Raef LaFrentz was once the talk of his town.

**Y**ou have to work hard to get to Monona. Sitting in the northeast corner of Iowa, the town of 1,500 is not close to anything. Minneapolis is 160 miles to the northeast. Milwaukee is 175 miles east and Des Moines is 180 miles to the southeast. Perhaps that's why people in Monona take care of their own business and, most importantly, take care of their own.

So it's understandable why the topic at everyone's dinner table in November of 1993 was not the economy or the local elections. Instead, the recurring question asked by everyone who came into the Monona Pharmacy to fill a prescription was, "What's Raef going to do?" For Raef LaFrentz, it was a question he'd been weighing for more than a year. The 6-foot-11 center from MFL Mar Mac High School had long been feinting and jabbing with college basketball recruiters, all of whom told him he could be a star in a much bigger show.

"Looking back at it, it seemed like a lot of fun, all that attention," LaFrentz said two years later, secure in his role as one of the stars on a Kansas team that most consider a top national championship contender. "But living through it was a different story."

Not even halfway through his college career, Raef LaFrentz's story is a worthy sequel to *Hoop Dreams*. He's the big kid from a small town who leaves his home state and becomes a big star—the unanimous selection as Big Eight Freshman of the Year after a season in which he averaged 11.4 points and 5.7 rebounds while becoming just the third player in Kansas history to start every game as a freshman. But could he really go home again?

"Going back to Monona was no problem," LaFrentz said. "My friends were still my friends. But the other stuff. . . ."

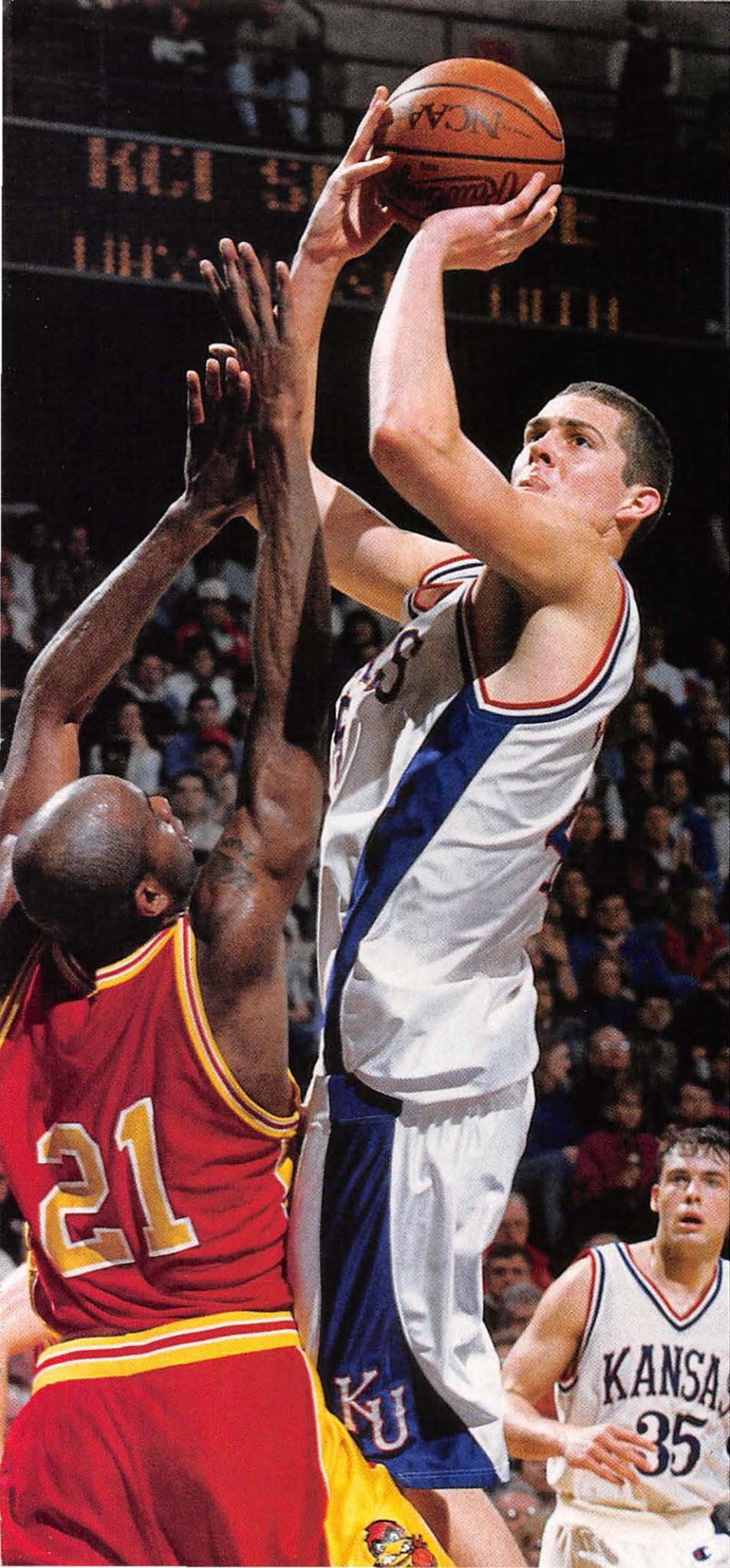
**MAKE NO MISTAKE, LAFRENTZ** says it has been more than a dream, the change from small-town kid to All-America big man. But some of what he faced during his recruitment went beyond what most star high school basketball players encounter. According to his father, LaFrentz was on the phone for 14 hours with recruiters on July 1, 1993, the first day of summer recruiting. "After a while it all sounded the same," LaFrentz said, "all the promises."

The onslaught of mail was fairly typical—"He was getting 20 to 25 letters a day," said Raef's father, Ron, who moved down to Lawrence with his wife this winter so they could attend all of their son's home games and most of his road games. The recruiting blitz didn't ease until LaFrentz narrowed his choices to Kansas, Iowa, Missouri and Notre Dame.

But several other incidents were something only a small-town local hero could experience. His visit to Iowa made the evening news across the state. Then came the afternoon of Nov. 15, 1993—Decision Day. LaFrentz appeared live on KOEL radio to announce his choice: Kansas, which emerged because coach Roy Williams simply outworked everybody else.

"I get tired just talking about it," Williams said. "I probably spent more time and effort recruiting Raef than I have any other kid I ever recruited. It was a full-court press every day, and I started to hear about him after his sophomore year in high school."

Kansas won out because of Williams, as well as the opportunity the school offered.



"They were straightforward. They didn't promise me a starting position. They told me I would have to work at it," LaFrentz said. "The biggest part of my choosing Kansas was that I felt a sense of honesty with the coaching staff. I really didn't feel that with any other coaching staff."

But Iowa residents saw the choice as LaFrentz turning his back on the whole state, which elicited letters and outrage from all corners—from angry locals to University of Iowa football coach Hayden Fry. "I was extremely disappointed that we lost that big, tall basketball player," Fry said then. "That really hurts. Whether he went to Iowa State or Iowa, we've got two fine academic universities, two fine basketball programs, not to mention Northern Iowa. For a youngster to have to leave the state to get an education and play ball, that really hurts me. I take it personally."

Williams only shakes his head in disgust at the verbal abuse heaped upon LaFrentz, who made his first trip back to Iowa as a college athlete when the Jayhawks played Iowa State in Ames last January. "He wasn't leaving the country. If a high school student from Iowa goes to Harvard, is he a traitor? He went to one of the top basketball schools in the country in Kansas. But if a kid leaves his home state, he's a bad guy?"

The "traitor" scored only five points at Iowa State, which was then a season-low. Whenever he touched the ball, the crowd roared. When he missed, they cheered. "That toughened me up," LaFrentz said. "It made me realize that it's a tough world out there. I was just wondering why the people of Iowa took such a negative attitude. But the people close to me know I made the right decision."

LaFrentz has adjusted well, although there were some rough moments as a freshman. "The difference between college and high school is like night and day," he said. "Especially for someone like me who came from a small town. Getting all that exposure last year helped. But there were a lot of things that I had trouble with because I didn't know what to expect. The biggest difference I noticed is that the intensity level is up every day."

Back in Monona, a Raef Watch was held all last season. Each game was charted. Each performance evaluated. They might have had to cheer behind closed doors, but he was, after all, still one of their own.

**MONONA MAY NOT BE EASY TO** find, but Ron and Ellen LaFrentz found it to their liking when they moved east from Hampton soon after they were married. During their courtship, Ron and Ellen had

BOB ROSS/STO

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

seen a movie called *Home From the Hill*, with a character named Raef Honeycutt played by George Peppard. Ellen liked the name and when a baby boy arrived two months after they moved to Monona, he was named Raef.

From an early age, it was clear that Raef would be taller than anyone in a family that includes Ron at 6-5 and Raef's older sister, Ann, now 6-4. As a young high school player, LaFrentz's ambitions were to stay within the confines of Iowa. "I was looking more at Division II or Northern Iowa," LaFrentz said.

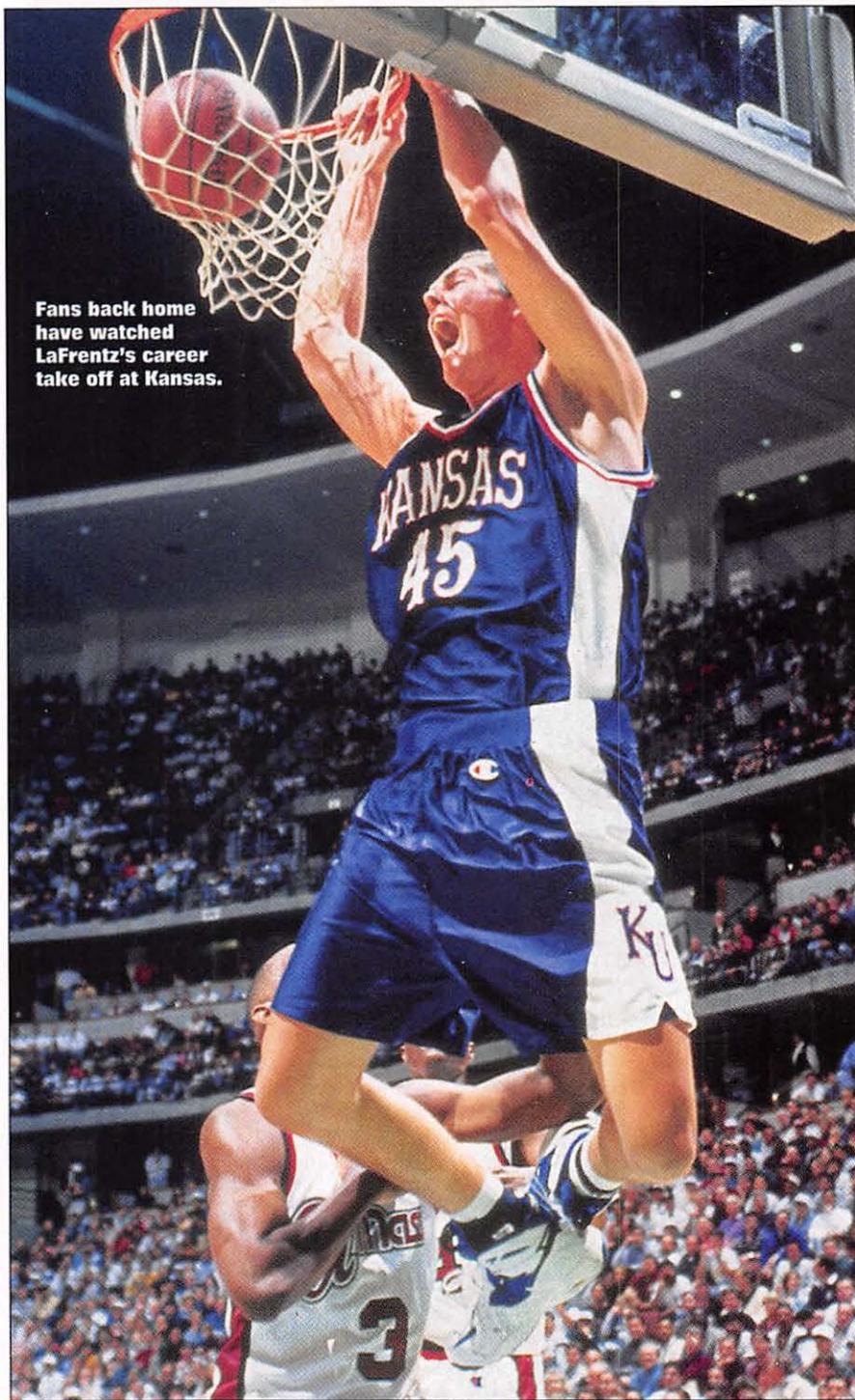
All of that changed during the summer between LaFrentz's sophomore and junior seasons. Playing in an AAU 17-and-under national tournament, LaFrentz became a star, averaging 30 points a game. With each game in the spotlight, LaFrentz continued to improve. Suddenly, the recruiters managed to find their way to Monona.

As the focus on LaFrentz increased during his recruitment, Williams thought at least once that he'd be on the outside looking in when America's small-town hero finally made his selection. "There was a time when I thought we had lost him," Williams said. "I called up Coach [Dean] Smith and was telling him about it and he tried to cheer me up. He said, 'You know, another one will always come along.' I said to him, 'Coach, that's easy for you to say at North Carolina, but we don't get that many.'"

In telling the story, Williams laughs like a fisherman who snagged the one that didn't get away. "You want to know what kind of kid Raef is?" said Williams, going to a bookcase. "Look at this picture. It's the only one I have from last year. It's Raef and he's on the bench, but Greg [Ostertag] had stolen the ball and dribbled behind his back and made this unbelievable play and there's Raef, sitting on the bench, screaming his head off. That's the kind of kid Raef is, someone who can enjoy another person's success. You can deal with kids like those. Those are the kind I'd like to bring home to my daughter."

There is a quality about LaFrentz that makes him seem everyone's favorite kid next door. LaFrentz, seated in a room just off the court at Allen Field House on the Kansas campus, is fresh off a typical Roy Williams practice, one of intense pressure with little wasted time. The uncertainty he experienced a year ago as a sophomore has vanished. "Knowing what to expect has helped a whole lot," he said. "It's not any easier. But I can handle it because I know what's coming."

After his freshman year, LaFrentz re-



Fans back home have watched LaFrentz's career take off at Kansas.

turned to Monona for a few months and landed a summer job. "Same one I've had the last four summers, working as a lifeguard at the city pool," LaFrentz said. "Easy money, just hanging with my friends, sitting in the sun, working on my tan." He returned to basketball by taking an end-of-summer trip with an all-star team that toured France, where the Jayhawks made a return trip this season over the Christmas holiday.

There is now a different enticement—with quick, if not easy, money—as the latest, far more subtle recruitment of LaFrentz builds. He has heard speculation already about how some feel he might leave Kansas

after this season for the riches of the NBA.

"It's flattering to hear your name mentioned in things like that," he said. "But, I'm not thinking about that yet. I know the money is tempting. With one season, you could be set for life. I, for one, wouldn't do it."

"It's a cruel world out there. I think a person needs four years for maturing in college just as a person," LaFrentz said. "After four years, you're so much more ready to go out into the world. My feeling is, why cheat yourself out of college? It's supposed to be the best time in your life." **CS**

Mark Blandschun is a staff writer for the Boston Globe.



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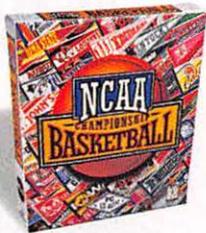
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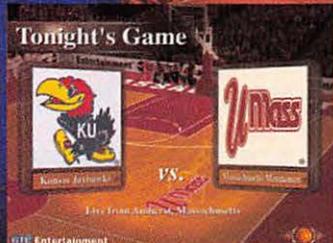
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# BASEBALL COLLEGE SPORTS' TOP 20

**Cal State-Fullerton Will Be Tested From The Start in Its Bid for a Second Straight Baseball Title**

**By GARY KLEIN**

**T**he 1996 college baseball season could very well start and end exactly the same way. On Feb. 2, Cal State-Fullerton will open defense of its national championship by playing Stanford. It's a safe bet the same teams will meet June 8 in the championship game of the College World Series in Omaha, Neb.

"Both of those clubs played in last year's World Series and they have plenty of talent coming back and great kids coming in," said Oklahoma coach Larry Cochell, who guided the Sooners to the 1994 NCAA title. "They lost some key players, but they haven't rebuilt—they've reloaded."

Every other Division I team will be trying to prevent the second consecutive all-California series final as Fullerton—which beat USC last year—attempts to become only the fourth school to win back-to-back titles, the first since Stanford did it in 1987 and '88.

## 1 CAL STATE-FULLERTON

Augie Garrido is the only coach in history to win national titles in three different decades (1979, 1984, 1995). With Mark Kotsay, COLLEGE SPORTS Preseason Player of the Year (p. 44), he could win another. Kotsay, an outfielder/pitcher, won the Golden Spikes Award last season as a sophomore. He batted .422 with 21 homers and 90 RBI; as a pitcher, he was 2-1 with a 0.31 earned run average and 11 saves for a Titans team that finished 57-9 despite playing what arguably was the toughest schedule in the nation.

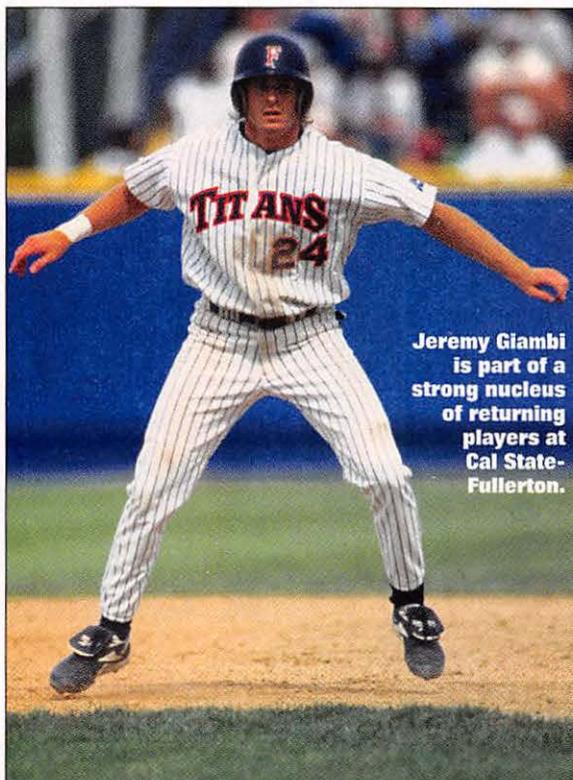
Other key returning players include catcher Brian Loyd (.360-10 HR-73 RBI), first baseman/outfielder C.J. Ankrum (.352-1-29), outfielder Jeremy Giambi (.349-4-37) and third baseman Tony Martinez (.291-7-42). An influx of talented transfers includes infielder Kris Didion (Tulane), pitcher Matt Wise (Pepperdine), outfielder

Scott Seal (UCLA), pitcher Kirk Irvine (Rancho Santiago Community College) and infielder Jerome Alviso (Canada CC).

"There is definitely a nucleus that can provide the leadership a team needs to get to Omaha," Kotsay said. "If we can put everyone else's expectations aside and concentrate on what we need to do, we'll be fine."

## 2 STANFORD

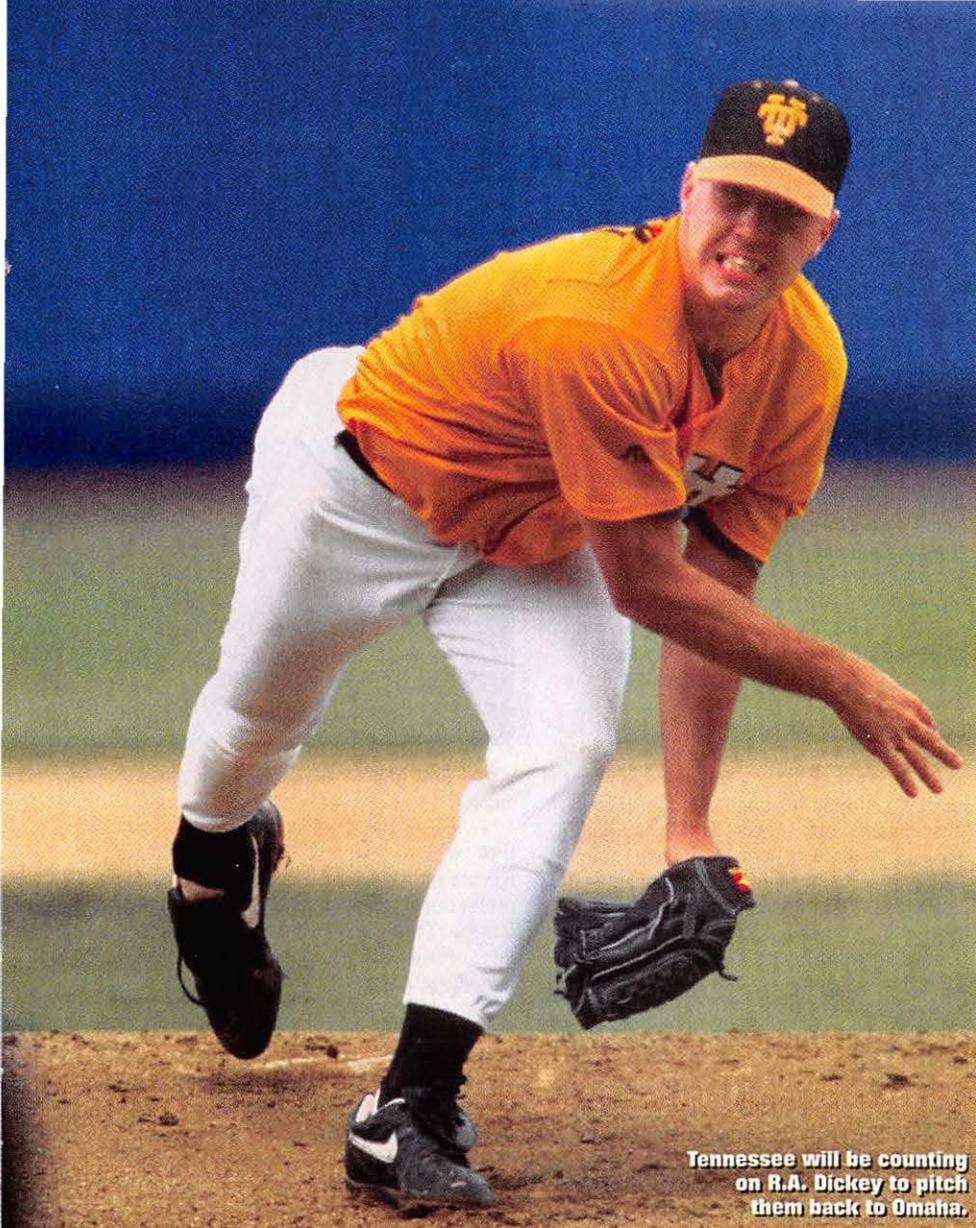
The Cardinal survived a multitude of injuries to reach Omaha last season but fell short of the performance expected from the highly touted group that arrived in Palo Alto as freshmen in 1992. With the return of catcher A.J. Hinch, who was drafted in the third round by the Minnesota Twins, and another wave of



Jeremy Giambi is part of a strong nucleus of returning players at Cal State-Fullerton.

## CS' TOP 20

- 1 CS-FULLERTON
- 2 STANFORD
- 3 LSU
- 4 OKLAHOMA
- 5 TENNESSEE
- 6 ARIZONA STATE
- 7 WICHITA STATE
- 8 GEORGIA TECH
- 9 TEXAS TECH
- 10 FLORIDA STATE
- 11 ALABAMA
- 12 OKLAHOMA STATE
- 13 CLEMSON
- 14 MISSISSIPPI STATE
- 15 LONG BEACH STATE
- 16 CALIFORNIA
- 17 TEXAS A&M
- 18 MIAMI (FLA.)
- 19 TEXAS
- 20 USC



Tennessee will be counting on R.A. Dickey to pitch them back to Omaha.

talented freshmen, Stanford again is expected to play for the national title.

Hinch is the only collegian guaranteed a spot on the Olympic team. Junior righthander Jason Middlebrook (1-5, 4.78) was hurt much of last season but is reportedly back at full strength and is certain to be a No. 1 draft choice in June. Freshman righthander Chad Hutchinson was the Atlanta Braves' top pick in last year's amateur draft.

Outfielder Cale Carter (.323-1-39), second baseman Brian Dallimore (.317-3-34), first baseman Troy Kent (.291-4-33) and shortstop Eric Sees (.251-1-26) are key returning position players.

### 3 LOUISIANA STATE

The Tigers finished 47-18 and were eliminated in the South Regional at Baton Rouge, La., but they are well-armed for another run at the national title for coach Skip Bertman, who also will guide the 1996 U.S. Olympic team in Atlanta this summer.

Ten pitchers return from last season, including junior lefthander Eddie Yarnall

(5-0, 3.45) and senior righthander Brett Laxton (4-4, 4.37), the national Freshman of the Year in 1993 who has struggled to regain his form the past two seasons. Second baseman Warren Morris (.369-8-50), first baseman Eddie Furniss (.326-9-50), shortstop Jason Williams (.315-10-47) and outfielder Chad Cooley (.308-7-61) form a solid nucleus.

"We have more seniors than I have ever had and a lot of players that have been through the Omaha experience," Bertman said. "We're not the kind of team that does one or two outstanding things, but we do everything well with players that have experience."

### 4 OKLAHOMA

The Sooners lost ace lefthander Mark Redman, but Cochell and the Sooners almost always find a way to Omaha. Catcher Javier Flores (.360-10-55), outfielder Bobby Brown (.362-6-36), first baseman Damon Minor (.344-10-44) and outfielder Brian Shackelford (.317-7-41) return from a team that played in the World Series last year.

Jeff Andra (6-2, 4.83) is the top returning pitcher. The status of infielder/pitcher Ryan Minor is uncertain until basketball ends. "We lost some people who had been in the program awhile, but this group has the makings of being another good one," Cochell said. "We're in the same boat as everyone else. Pitching is the key."

### 5 TENNESSEE

The Volunteers took a giant step as a program by going 54-16 and reaching the College World Series last season. Despite the departure of all-everything Todd Helton, coach Rod Delmonico could be making another trip to Omaha this spring.

Junior righthander R.A. Dickey (14-4, 4.28) and senior righthander Ryan Meyers (10-2, 3.46) anchor a staff that also includes senior righthander Scott Schroeffel (7-3, 2.73) who, while doubling as an outfielder, batted .331 with nine homers and 52 RBI last season. John Alkire (7-3, 2.73) is the stopper.

Delmonico signed four top JUCO players from Southern California, including shortstop Augie Ojeda, who may be the starter for Team USA in the 1996 Olympics. "This is probably the best team we've ever had because of depth," Delmonico said. "We're also stronger and bigger than we have ever been."

### 6 ARIZONA STATE

The Sun Devils just missed the playoffs last year in Pat Murphy's first season as coach. Expect to see them in a regional in May. Senior second baseman Robbie Kent (.341-7-47) and junior catcher/infielder Cody McKay (.315-5-53) will be joined by top JUCO transfer Jeff Cermak to lead the offense.

The pitching staff includes junior righthanders Kaipo Spenser (8-5, 3.05) and Ryan Bradle (5-3, 3.18) and freshman lefthanders Phill Lowery and Ryan Mills.

### 7 WICHITA STATE

Coach Gene Stephenson's Shockers are primed for a return to Omaha with an offense led by third baseman Casey Blake (.362-10-65) and a pitching staff featuring Braden Looper (3-3, 1.77, 13 saves), first baseman/pitcher Ben Thomas (.368-7-44 and 5-0, 4.47), catcher Nathan Reese (.367-3-45) and outfielder Jerry Stine (.328-4-44) are other top returning position players. Brandon Baird (11-3, 3.72) and Steve Foral (3-3, 2.44) anchor an experienced pitching staff.

### 8 GEORGIA TECH

The Yellow Jackets were eliminated in two games in the NCAA playoffs last season but are primed for their second trip to Omaha in three years. Catcher Tucker Barr (.290-14-70) doubles as the team's closer; he recorded 12 saves last season. First baseman Scott Byers (.380-7-59), shortstop Michael

# TOP 20

Sorrow (.347-4-41) and outfielders J.J. Thomas (.348-13-46) and Mark Fischer (.339-4-56) form an experienced nucleus.

Sophomores Kris Wilson (8-2, 3.46), David Elder (10-5, 6.98), Shane McGill (9-4, 5.03) and L.J. Yankosky (4-0, 2.68) are the top pitchers, while shortstop Jay Hood and pitcher Chuck Crowder are the top freshmen.

## 9 TEXAS TECH

The Red Raiders have been on the verge of breaking into the elite for the last few seasons. This may be the year they do it. "We have enough coming back," coach Larry Hayes said. "With any kind of help from our new people, we should be able to take the next step."

All-America third baseman Clint Bryant (.422-16-93) leads a lineup that includes catcher David Lindstrom (.356-12-56) and shortstop Dion Ruecker (.276-17-68) and makes the Red Raiders one of the favorites for the Southwest Conference championship. Matt Miller (11-3, 5.11) and Jeff Peck (10-3, 3.73) are the top pitchers. First baseman Joe Dillon, who batted .403 at Santa Rosa (Calif.) Community College last season, is the top newcomer.

## 10 FLORIDA STATE

For the first time in a long time, the Seminoles are not considered a lock to play in the World Series. Perhaps, then, this is the year coach Mike Martin finally wins that elusive national title.

Florida State lost two No. 1 draft picks and three other pitchers who turned pro from a staff that helped the Seminoles finish 53-16 last season. Outfielder J.D. Drew (.325-17-63), third baseman Scott Zech (.330) and designated hitter Adam Faurot (.324-10-28) are the top returning position players.

## 11 ALABAMA

The Crimson Tide finished 42-23 last season under first-year coach Jim Wells and gave notice that they would be a College World Series contender this season. First baseman Chris Moller (.405-10-44) is the first Alabama player since Dave Magadan to hit .400 or better. Other key returnees include outfielders Dustan Mohr (.293-12-44) and Rusty Loflin (.298-5-23). Starters Chris Eilers (6-3, 3.48), John Collins (5-5, 3.62), Joel Colgrove (6-4, 4.40) and reliever Tim Young (6-3, 1.67, 7 saves) might be ready to take Alabama to the next level.

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON PLAYER OF THE YEAR

### MARK KOTSAY Cal State-Fullerton

It's called the College World Series, but it might as well be known as Mark Kotsay's personal showcase. Kotsay, a centerfielder and relief pitcher for Cal State-Fullerton, enters his junior season as the nation's premier player after rewriting the World Series record book with his performances in the last two tournaments. Along the way, he has picked up a national championship, a World Series MVP trophy, the Golden Spikes Award, a probable spot on the U.S. Olympic team and a shot at being taken in the first round of the amateur draft.

"I get in a zone at the World Series, but I can't explain how I get there," Kotsay said. "I guess I just love the environment and the pressure."

Does he ever. As a freshman in 1994, Kotsay hit .462 (6-for-13) with a grand slam and eight runs batted in for a Fullerton team that narrowly missed advancing to the championship game. Last season, Kotsay hit .563 (9-for-16) with three homers, two doubles and 10 RBI as Fullerton won its third national title. In the Titans' 11-5 championship game victory over USC, Kotsay homered in his first two swings, drove in five runs, made an outstanding catch in center field and pitched the final  $\frac{1}{3}$  innings.

"Everything felt like it was in slow motion," said Kotsay, the all-time leading hitter in World Series play with a .517 career batting average and 1.103 slugging percentage. "The atmosphere in Omaha just provides me with that feeling."

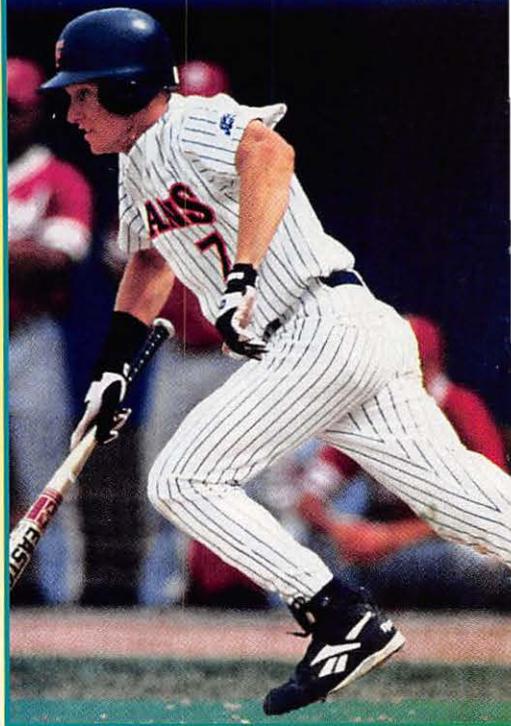
Kotsay, 6-foot, 190 pounds, might be known on a national level now, but he was hardly a sought-after commodity while playing at Santa Fe High in Santa Fe Springs, Calif. Fullerton offered him a partial scholarship during the early signing period before his senior year based largely on the recommendation of a summer league coach.

Kotsay arrived at Fullerton undrafted with hopes of perhaps making a positive impression his freshman year. He wound up starting 34 of the 41 games he played in and hit a team-high .372 with four homers and 35 RBI. Last season, Kotsay batted .422 with 21 homers, 20 doubles, 90 RBI and 15 stolen bases while leading Fullerton to a 57-9 record. He also was 2-1 with

## 12 OKLAHOMA STATE

Fourteen players from last season's team signed professional contracts, but the Cowboys have won or shared 10 consecutive Big Eight Conference championships and there is no reason to suspect much will change in coach Gary Ward's 19th season.

Junior designated hitter Wiley Steelman (.314-13-61) and senior second baseman Tripp MacKay (.319-3-50, 16 steals) are the top returning offensive threats. The pitching staff will be bolstered by senior



DENNIS HERRARD

a 0.31 ERA and 11 saves from the pitching mound.

Following the CWS, Kotsay joined Team USA for its summer tour. He hit .358 with three homers and 31 RBI and was selected as the top professional prospect during the National Baseball Congress World Series. Despite that last accolade, however, most pro scouts question Kotsay's speed and arm strength, factors that could impact his position in the draft. None, however, question his make-up.

"Mark's not the proverbial 'five-tool player' that the pro scouts rave about," said LSU coach Skip Bertman, who guided Team USA last summer and will manage the 1996 Olympic team. "The way he plays the game is his greatest tool. It isn't that he just plays hard—he plays smart and is incredibly clutch."

Kotsay said he is not worried about the draft. Not with another national championship—and an Olympic gold medal—to think about. "People might be expecting a lot from me this year, but I'm not going to approach it any differently than I have in the past," he said. "I'm going to be put in the same leadership role as last year and most likely the same spot in the lineup."

"If our team is successful, I'm going to be successful. And if our team is successful, that means we have a good chance of getting back to Omaha again. Now *that* is something worth thinking about."—G.K.

transfers Ryan Graves (Loyola Marymount) and Sean McLellan (Florida). Other newcomers include junior shortstop Mark Schlosser, a transfer from Tennessee, and freshman catcher/designated hitter Josh Holliday, the son of Cowboys assistant Tom Holliday.

## 13 CLEMSON

The Tigers lost several key players from last year's College World Series team, but there is always plenty of talent waiting in the

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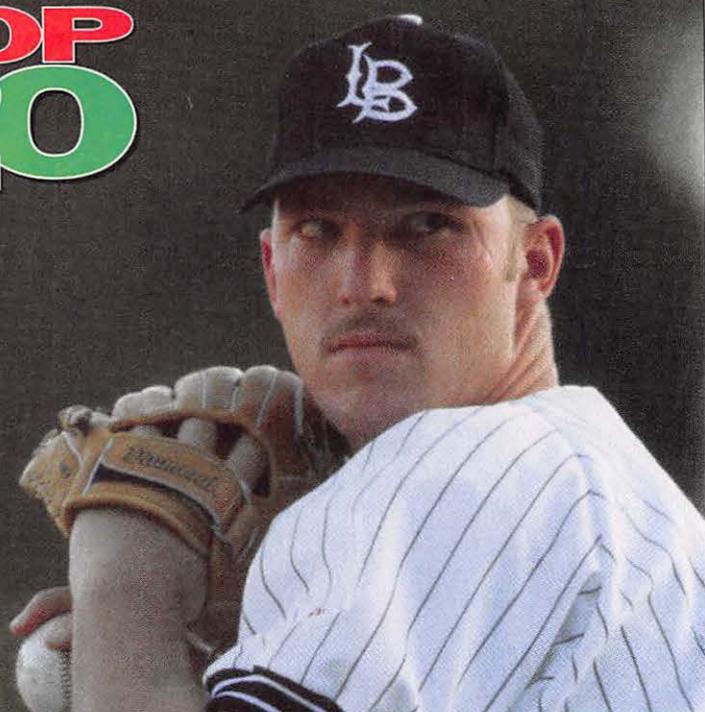
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# TOP 20

Rocky Biddle averaged more than a strikeout per inning last season for Long Beach State.



JOHN QUINTELLA

wings. Third-year coach Jack Leggett has a rotation that features Kris Benson (8-3), Billy Koch (7-2) and Ken Vining (4-0).

Sophomore catcher/designated hitter Matt LeCroy (.333-15-72) leads the offense. Other top returnees include junior outfielder Gary Burnham and senior third baseman Paul Galloway, who should help make the Tigers among the favorites for the Atlantic Coast Conference title.

## 14 MISSISSIPPI STATE

Coach Ron Polk begins his 21st season in Starkville with a roster full of talented sophomores who helped the Bulldogs to a 34-25 record last spring. Mississippi State is likely to start five sophomores, including outfielder Rusty Thomas (.321) and infielders Richard Lee (.304), Rob Hauswald (.301), Adam Piatt (.261) and Brad Freeman (.236).

Senior outfielder David Hayman (.298-17-55) is the top returning hitter along with senior first baseman Brian Clark (.314-5-38). Sophomore pitcher Eric DuBose (8-4, 3.28) is the ace and outfielder Brian Wiese the top freshman.

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON ALL-AMERICA TEAM

### FIRST TEAM

POS./PLAYER	SCHOOL/YEAR	HT./WT.	STATS
C A.J. Hinch	Stanford/Sr.	6-1/200	.366, 9 HR, 58 RBI
1B Travis Lee	San Diego St./Jr.	6-3/205	.350, 7 HR, 41 RBI
2B Warren Morris	LSU/Jr.	5-11/170	.369, 8 HR, 50 RBI
SS Alex Cora	Miami (Fla.)/Jr.	6-0/183	.270, 24 RBI
3B Clint Bryant	Texas Tech/Sr.	6-0/175	.422, 16 HR, 93 RBI
OF Mark Kotsay	CS-Fullerton/Jr.	6-0/180	.422, 21 HR, 90 RBI
OF Jacque Jones	USC/Jr.	5-10/170	.353, 7 HR, 53 RBI
OF J.D. Drew	Florida St./Soph.	6-1/190	.325, 17 HR, 63 RBI
DH Matt LeCroy	Clemson/Soph.	6-2/205	.333, 15 HR, 72 RBI
P Rocky Biddle	Long Beach St./Soph.	6-0/205	6-1, 3.74 ERA
P Kyle Peterson	Stanford/Soph.	6-3/190	14-1, 2.96 ERA
P R.A. Dickey	Tennessee/Jr.	6-2/185	14-4, 4.28 ERA
P Ryan Halla	Auburn/Sr.	6-5/250	16-3, 3.07 ERA
P Braden Loper	Wichita St./Jr.	6-5/220	3-3, 13 SV, 1.77 ERA

### SECOND TEAM

C Javier Flores	Oklahoma/Jr.	5-11/175	.360, 10 HR, 55 RBI
1B Chris Moller	Alabama/Sr.	6-3/258	.405, 10 HR, 44 RBI
2B David Eckstein	Florida/Jr.	5-9/160	.348, 6 HR, 41 RBI
SS Augie Ojeda	Tennessee/Jr.	5-10/164	.294, 25 RBI
3B Casey Blake	Wichita St./Sr.	6-3/195	.362, 10 HR, 65 RBI
OF Chad Green	Kentucky/Jr.	5-10/182	.350, 5 HR, 43 RBI, 54 SB
OF Josh Paul	Vanderbilt/Jr.	6-2/190	.388, 10 HR, 50 RBI
OF Brian Shackelford	Oklahoma/Soph.	6-2/190	.317, 7 HR, 41 RBI
DH Troy Glaus	UCLA/Soph.	6-5/190	.258, 12 HR, 39 RBI
P Randy Flores	USC/Jr.	6-0/165	13-3, 3.24 ERA
P Eddie Yarnall	LSU/Jr.	6-4/220	5-0, 3.45 ERA
P Eric DuBose	Mississippi St./Soph.	6-2/215	8-4, 3.28 ERA
P Randy Wolf	Pepperdine/Soph.	6-0/185	9-1, 2.16 ERA
P Jason Middlebrook	Stanford/Jr.	6-3/200	1-5, 4.78 ERA

## 15 LONG BEACH STATE

All eyes in the Big West Conference will be on Fullerton, but the 49ers have the makings of another World Series team under coach Dave Snow. All-America righthander Rocky Biddle (6-1, 3.74) dominated at the end of last season and finished with 122 strikeouts in 108 innings. He and Kyle Wilson (13-3, 3.74) give the 49ers one of the best starter combinations in the country.

Designated hitter Jason Hodges (.332-3-43), outfielder Will Skett (.340-4-38) and first baseman Jeff Tagliaferri (.297-7-32) are the top returners from a team that advanced to the West Regional final last season. Kevin Moore, a JUCO infielder, pitcher Ryan Brannan (Miami) and shortstop Dan Almonte (Old Dominion) all transferred in and will start.

## 16 CALIFORNIA

The Bears have not won the Pac-10 since 1980, but that could change if 19th-year coach Bob Milano gets the performances he expects from his pitchers. Sophomore Ryan Drese was 5-1 with a 2.15 ERA for Team

## JUCO TRANSFERS TO WATCH

### AUGIE OJEDA, Tennessee

Shortstop, 5-10, 165

Ojeda, a defensive whiz, was impressive at the Team USA tryouts during the winter and could be the starter for the 1996 Olympic Team. Tennessee coach Rod Delmonico calls Ojeda "the best shortstop in the country, bar none." He batted .294 for Cypress (Calif.) Community College last season.

### JEFF CERMAK, Arizona State

Outfielder, 6-3, 195

Arizona State coach Pat Murphy did not have to look far to find a player who was a dominant offensive force last season at Mesa (Ariz.) Community College. Cermak batted .409 with five homers and 68 RBI. He also had 22 doubles and seven triples.

### MIKE DAVIS, Florida State

Pitcher, 6-0, 185

Davis, a righthander, has been drafted three times and was considered the country's top JUCO prospect while pitching last season for Tallahassee (Fla.) Community College. Davis was 6-3 with a 2.49 ERA and 77 strikeouts in 72 innings last season.

### JOE DILLON, Texas Tech

First baseman, 6-2, 195

Dillon was one of the top hitters in California last season, batting .403 for Santa Rosa Community College. Dillon will step right into a starting job with the Red Raiders, giving an already potent lineup another big bat.

### KIRK IRVINE, Cal State-Fullerton

Pitcher, 6-0, 185

Irvine, a righthander, was 12-3 with a 2.25 ERA for Rancho Santiago Community College, a perennial power in California. He is expected to help fill the void created by the loss of All-America Ted Silva.

## FRESHMEN TO WATCH

### CHAD HUTCHINSON, Stanford

Pitcher, 6-5, 230

Hutchinson was the Atlanta Braves' No. 1 draft pick last June but signed with the Cardinal to play football and baseball. He was 10-0 with a 1.32 ERA and 102 strikeouts in 64 innings last season at Torrey Pines High (Calif.).

### BRAD WILKERSON, Florida

First baseman/pitcher, 6-0, 190

Wilkinson was 12-1 with a 1.24 ERA and 151 strikeouts last season at Apollo High in Owensboro, Ky. He won three games, including the gold medal game against Taipei, and hit three homers in the World Junior Championships last summer. He is one of 25 new players who have joined the Gators.

### JOSH HOLLIDAY, Oklahoma State

Catcher/DH, 5-11, 190

Holliday, the son of Cowboys assistant Tom Holliday, is a switch-hitter with tremendous talent and maturity. "He's mentally and emotionally ahead of most players his age," Cowboys coach Gary Ward said. "He's known the system since he was 10, so he should contribute immediately."

### ERIC VALENT, UCLA

Outfielder, 6-0, 190

Valent will start for the Bruins in center field after leading the USA Junior National Team to the World Junior championship last summer. Valent, who hit .506 during his senior year at Canyon High School in Anaheim, Calif., batted .389 for Team USA.

### RYAN MILLS, Arizona State

Pitcher, 6-5, 185

Mills, a lefthander, turned down more than \$300,000 from the New York Yankees to join the Sun Devils. He is part of an outstanding recruiting class that also features lefthander Phill Lowery.

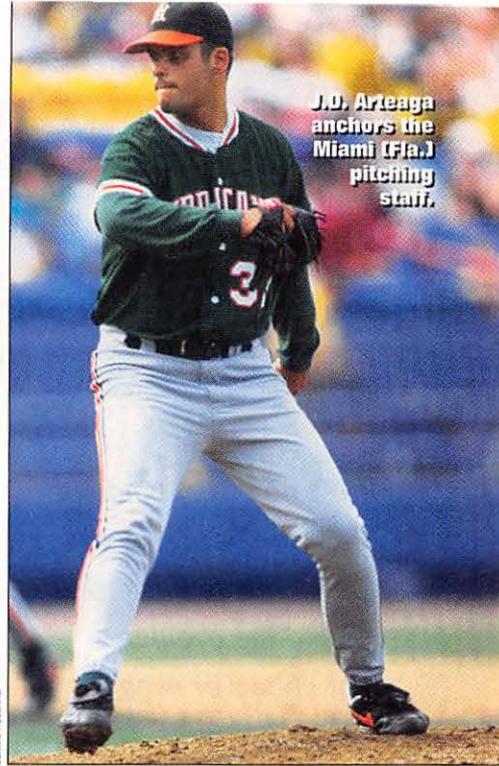
USA last summer and beat Cuba. Drew Pearce, who sat out last season following arm surgery, was 5-3 with a 3.52 ERA in 1994. Junior Keith Evans was 7-6 with a 4.39 ERA last season.

Senior outfielder Gavin Brown (.321-11-45), junior outfielder Ivan Lewis (.318, 43 stolen bases), senior outfielder Jon Petke (.312) and junior shortstop Dan Cey (.288) are an experienced nucleus. Andy Tarpley, who batted .322 with nine homers in 1994, also returns for his senior season.

## 17 TEXAS A&M

The Aggies have experience and pitching, which should mean another run at a Southwest Conference title and the playoffs. Outfielder Chad Allen (.373-1-59) is the big man in a lineup that also features first baseman Jeff Bailey (.347-9-47) and third baseman Jason Stephens (.292-7-41).

Ryan Rupe (6-3, 5.05), John Sneed (6-3, 5.08) and Dean Mitchell (8-1, 4.33) head a staff that also includes JUCO transfer Matt Blank.



J.D. Artega anchors the Miami (Fla.) pitching staff.

## 18 MIAMI (FLA.)

The Hurricanes have only three returning starters from the team that finished 48-17 and advanced to the World Series in Jim Morris' third year as coach. Outfielder Eddie Rivero (.316-7-40), infielder Rudy Gomez (.372-8-41) and shortstop Alex Cora (.270-0-24) are the nucleus. J.D. Artega (11-3, 3.57) and Allan Westfall (6-0, 3.21) anchor the pitching staff.

## 19 TEXAS

The four-time national champion Longhorns are perennial contenders under Cliff Gustafson, who has compiled a record of 1,388-349-2 in 28 seasons as coach. First baseman Danny Peoples (.343-11-62), third baseman MacGregor Byers (.379-3-49) and outfielders Chris Edelstein (.372-1-44) and Brett Loeffler (.347-5-24) lead the offense. Jake O'Dell (11-3, 3.77) is the top returning pitcher.

## 20 USC

After a 17-year absence, the Trojans returned to Omaha last season and finished second to Fullerton. USC lost several of the key players from that club, but outfielder Jacque Jones (.353-7-53), catcher Chad Moeller (.329-5-29), first baseman Greg Walbridge (.302-9-47) and third baseman Ernie Diaz (.256-9-37) are back.

Lefthander Randy Flores (13-3, 3.24) anchors the staff and big things are expected of Jack Krawczyk (4-2, 4.11), who pitched well in the World Series. Shortstop Marc Mirizzi, a Loyola Marymount transfer who was a 1994 freshman All America, is a top newcomer. **CS**

Gary Klein is a free-lance writer based in Pasadena, Calif.

# MAKING THEIR MARK



**T**oo often, some of the best plays in college basketball never make the evening highlight shows or even receive mention in the next day's newspaper. After all, brilliant bounce passes through traffic and well-timed, momentum-swinging steals are plays that often thrill coaches more than fans.

But CS appreciates the value of the subtle skills that separate winners from also-rans. We've compiled a list ranking the top five players in each of nine categories, some obvious—such as scorers—and others that don't always show up in the boxscore—such as clutch free-throw shooters. They're CS' skills specialists, the players whose unique talents earn the highest raves from coaches and basketball aficionados alike.

By **DEBBIE  
BECKER**



**TINA NICHOLSON**  
Penn State

## Passers

- 1 TINA NICHOLSON, Penn State
- 2 SAUDIA ROUNDTREE, Georgia
- 3 JENNIFER RIZZOTTI, UConn
- 4 LISA BRANCH, Texas A&M
- 5 MICHELLE MARCINIAK, Tennessee

Nicholson has run Penn State's offense since she was a freshman so, according to Lady Lions coach Rene Portland, the 5-foot-3 senior guard has by now taken the role to a new level. "She's the best point

guard going," Portland said. "She gets the job done. She makes other people be open even when they don't think they're open."

A two-time All-Big Ten selection, Nicholson averaged 8.1 assists per game last year—third-best nationally—and she already has more than 600 career assists.

Roundtree, Georgia's 5-7 senior, made a smooth transition from junior college last season, giving the Bulldogs 14.8 points and 5.8 assists a game. Purdue coach Lin Dunn calls Georgia's Roundtree "the Energizer Bunny. She never slows down."

"She's so creative," Georgia coach Andy Landers said. "She does what most coaches discourage—she leaves her feet. But she has great body control when she's airborne. She jumps straight up and has great hang time."

Rizzotti isn't afraid to mix it up, that's why she wears football pads underneath her uniform each game. Connecticut's feisty 5-5 senior guard gave the Huskies 134 assists last season, averaged 12.5 points and shot 41.3 percent from three-point range.

"She's got a good sense of where everyone is on the court," UConn coach Geno Auriemma said. "She's one of the kids who really studies what's going on on the court. She takes advantage of what the defense is giving us. She's not one to force something that's not there."

## Three-Point Shooters

- 1 DANIELLE VIGLIONE, *Texas*
- 2 JENNIFER HOWARD, *N.C. State*
- 3 AMY ENGLE, *East Tennessee State*
- 4 JULIE KROMMENHOEK, *Utah*
- 5 MONICK FOOTE, *Virginia*

Viglione, Texas' 5-10 junior, has one of the most distinctive shots in college basketball. Her catch-and-launch three-pointer still baffles Longhorns coach Jody Conradt, who can't quite explain how what Viglione does works. But Conradt isn't complaining. Viglione hit 115 threes during her freshman year and 42 last year despite missing half the season with an ankle injury.

"Her release is what sets her apart," Conradt said. "But if her shot breaks, I have no idea how to fix it."

Viglione's deep-threat proficiency is well-known to opponents, who have begun to make it harder for her to launch her patented shot. Perhaps that explains why, when asked what one aspect she would change about basketball, Viglione said, "Put in a five-point line at halfcourt."

Despite playing for teams that likely won't make the national rankings, East Tennessee State's Amy Engle and Utah's Julie Krommenhoek have some impressive numbers of their own. Krommenhoek hit 76 of 160 for 47.5 percent; Engle made 82 of 192 for 42 percent.

## Clutch Free-Throw Shooters

- 1 CHRISTY SMITH, *Arkansas*
- 2 KATIE SMITH, *Ohio State*
- 3 HEATHER PRATER, *Middle Tenn. St.*
- 4 KIM BRANDL, *Southern Methodist*
- 5 KERI CHACONAS, *George Mason*

Smith did everything for Arkansas last season, including playing a stretch of 525 consecutive minutes (11 regular season plus two tournament games). "Christy never lost a beat," Arkansas coach Gary Blair said. "It got to be a badge of honor with our

team—how could anyone else be tired when Christy is going 40 minutes. It's like a Cal Ripken expectation."

But the grind didn't show when Smith stepped to the line with the game in the balance. The Razorbacks' 5-6 sophomore led the nation last season in free-throw percentage, hitting 134 of 149, an 89.9-percent clip. "She has the same routine every time," Blair said. "She dribbles, then says, 'Nothing but net.' In a clutch situation, there is no one you want on the line more than Christy Smith."

## Rebounders

- 1 KARA WOLTERS, *Connecticut*
- 2 WENDY PALMER, *Virginia*
- 3 DANA WYNNE, *Seton Hall*
- 4 TINA THOMPSON, *USC*
- 5 ANGIE POTTOFF, *Penn State*

The 1996 U.S. Olympic women's basketball team needs some height, and speculation is that, come May, the 6-7 Wolters will become the 12th and final Olympian. In greatest demand—Wolters' rebounding skills.

"The thing that makes Kara so good is she has great footwork," Auriemma said. "I'd like to see her become even more physical and aggressive inside but sometimes the officials won't let her play like that."

Penn State, with point guard wonder Nicholson, could make a run at the Final Four with the presence of 6-1 junior Angie Pottoff, a tenacious rebounder. "She's just so explosive and quick," Portland said. "She has a real nose for the ball. Size doesn't bother her at all."

## Shot Blockers

- 1 ANGELA GORSICA, *Vanderbilt*
- 2 SHANNON SPRIGGS, *Texas-Arlington*
- 3 KARA WOLTERS, *UConn*
- 4 STACEY LOVELACE, *Purdue*
- 5 TAJAMA ABRAHAM, *Geo. Washington*

Gorsica is an engineering major, so it figures she knows a bit about the mechanics of swatting balls in mid-air. "It's something we've talked a lot about," Vanderbilt coach Jim Foster said. "It's something she's decided to improve on. It adds a great dimension to her game."

Vanderbilt's 6-7 junior led the nation last season with 106 blocks in 35 games, a 3.0 average, and she ranks fourth among the Lady Commodores' all-time best shot-blockers with 161 after just two seasons.

Purdue's 6-4 Lovelace is an intimidating presence in the game, and it's not just that tiger tattoo on her right thigh. Lovelace posted some imposing numbers last season, averaging 14.2 points, 8.1 rebounds and 2.5 blocks a game. "She's really developed her ability to time the shot and jump," Purdue's coach Dunn said. "She's exceptionally quick. That helps get her in position."



**KARA WOLTERS**  
UConn

## Pure Shooters

- 1 KATIE SMITH, *Ohio State*
- 2 WENDY PALMER, *Virginia*
- 3 CINDY BLODGETT, *Maine*
- 4 STEPHANIE WHITE, *Purdue*
- 5 CHAMIQUE HOLDSCLAW, *Tennessee*

Call it a changing of the guard—and the forwards, as well—considering some of the top pure shooters in the game are freshmen and sophomores ready to step in when the established All-Americans graduate. Smith and Palmer, long-time stars, are just a notch above Blodgett, a sophomore, and White and Holdsclaw, a pair of highly touted freshmen.

But the veterans have earned their due. Smith, the 5-11 senior, is one of the few college players the U.S. Olympic team is considering adding to the roster. Smith and Kara Wolters were the only two collegians who practiced with the national team dur-

ing its tryouts last year.

"First of all, Katie has great knowledge of the game," Ohio State coach Nancy Darsch said. "She always is aware of what's going on. She has power, strength, speed and quickness. There aren't many things she can't do."

In Charlottesville, Va., Palmer is nicknamed LP<sup>2</sup>, for Low Post Phenom. Palmer, the '94-'95 ACC Player of the Year, averaged 17 points and 14.5 rebounds in postseason play. With 137 rebounds this season, the 6-2 senior will become the first women's player in Virginia's storied history to reach 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds.

## Scorers

- 1 **LATASHA BYEARS, DePaul**
- 2 **TANJA KOSTIC, Oregon State**
- 3 **SHANNON JOHNSON, So. Carolina**
- 4 **CHASITY MELVIN, N.C. State**
- 5 **CHARISSE SAMPSON, Kansas**

Scorers are never content to rely on just one move to score. They hunger to add a new shot here, a head fake there, with a stutter-step or two thrown in for good measure. That's what makes DePaul's 5-11 Byears the best of a talented bunch.

"She's very shrewd," DePaul coach Doug Bruno said. "It's instinctive stuff, nothing we taught her. She spent a lot of time on the playground, spending five or six hours a day playing against the guys."

Byears has a bag of tricks that includes her favorite—the Hakeem the Dream spin. "I've been able to score all my life," said Byears, the second-leading scorer in Division I last season with a 26.4 average.

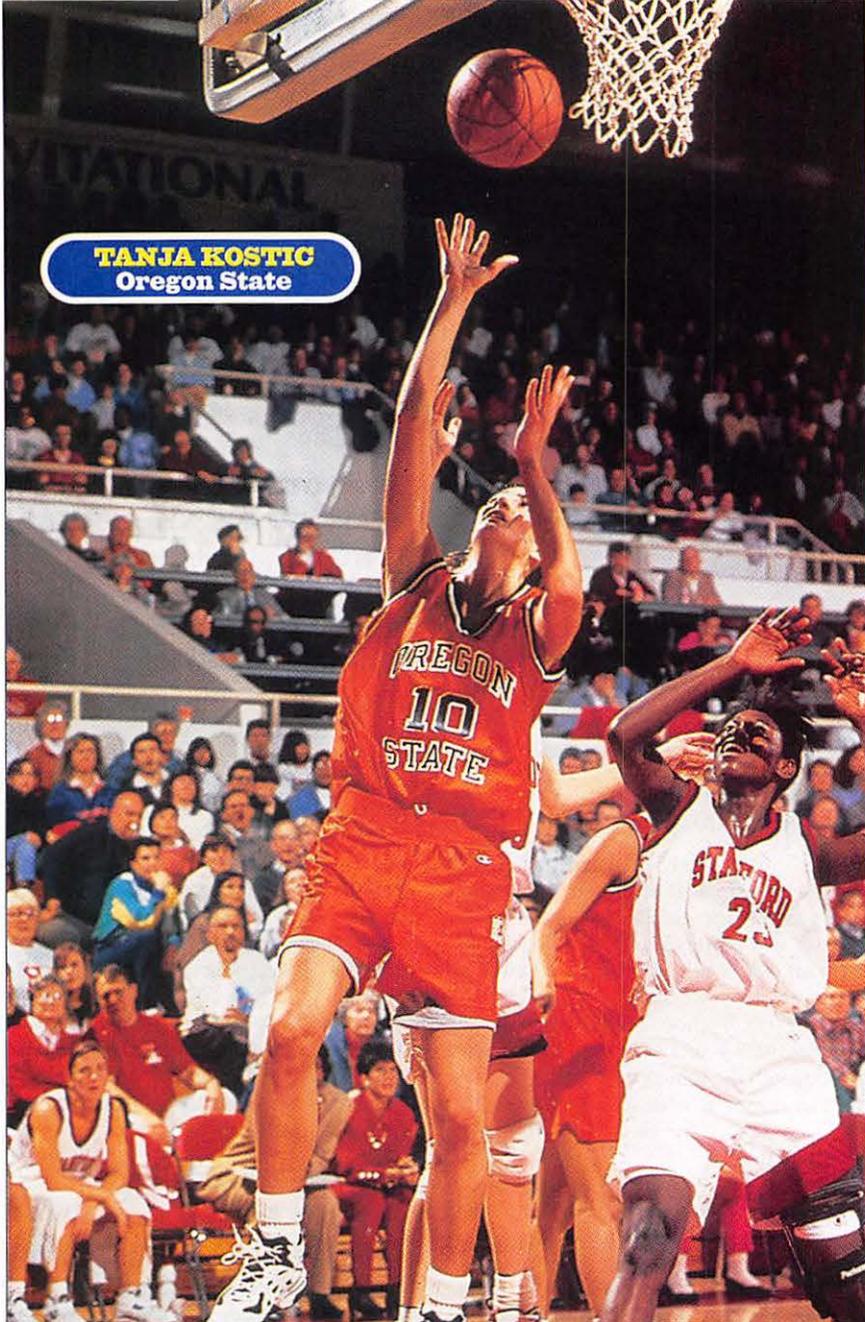
"She can make the tough shots," Tennessee's Pat Summitt said of Byears. "She's got a variety of offensive moves. She really works hard to get the ball but she plays well without it. The great offensive players create shots before they get the ball."

Kostic, a 6-2 senior from Sweden, averaged 22.4 points a game and was named Pac-10 Player of the Year as a junior. "Her best attributes are her anticipation and reaction skills," Oregon State coach Judi Spoelstra said. "I don't know that we've had a player like that in this country since Andrea Lloyd at Texas."

## Steals

- 1 **KORIE HLEDE, Duquesne**
- 2 **LEKEYSHA JOHNSON, Southern-Baton Rouge**
- 3 **KASIA McCLENDON, Southern Illinois**
- 4 **KEISHA ANDERSON, Wisconsin**
- 5 **TAMEKA DIXON, Kansas**

Two years ago, Duquesne coach Dan Durkin offered a full scholarship to a player he had never seen, save for a grainy



**TANJA KOSTIC**  
Oregon State

old videotape. It was Korie Hlede, who dreamed of leaving war-torn Croatia for a chance to play basketball in America.

Hlede took Durkin's offer and made the most of it last year, exploding for an eye-opening freshman year in which the 5-9 star averaged 24.2 points and 4.2 steals. "She makes things happen and has the strength to make other people around her better," Durkin said.

Kansas' Dixon is one of the most explosive players in the nation. She gained national attention when she scored 30 points against No. 1 Connecticut in a nationally televised game last season. Talent might just run in the family; Dixon's father is Boo Bowers, a former star at American.

## Defenders

- 1 **LATINA DAVIS, Tennessee**
- 2 **VICKIE JOHNSON, Louisiana Tech**
- 3 **ALFREDA JEFFERSON, Delaware St.**

- 4 **ANITA MAXWELL, New Mexico St.**
- 5 **BECKY FLYNN, Creighton**

Sure, Tennessee has won three national championships, but what coach Pat Summitt's program is best known for is its defense. This year's leader is 5-6 senior guard Latina Davis.

"She just has the ability to really influence how other people play," Summitt said. "She's a smaller version of Nikki McCray. She does a real good job of containing penetration. She has those quick hands."

Defense is also a trademark in Ruston, La., home of Louisiana Tech and 5-9 senior guard Vickie Johnson, who also has led the Lady Techsters in scoring each of the past three seasons. "She's got a very strong lower body," Tech coach Leon Barmore said. "It's very difficult to drive by her. You're not just going to go in there and get rebounds off her." **CS**

Debbie Becker is a staff writer for USA Today.

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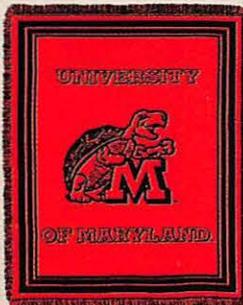
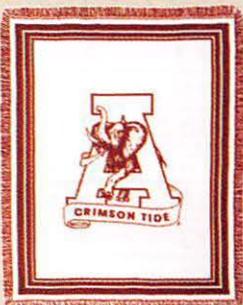
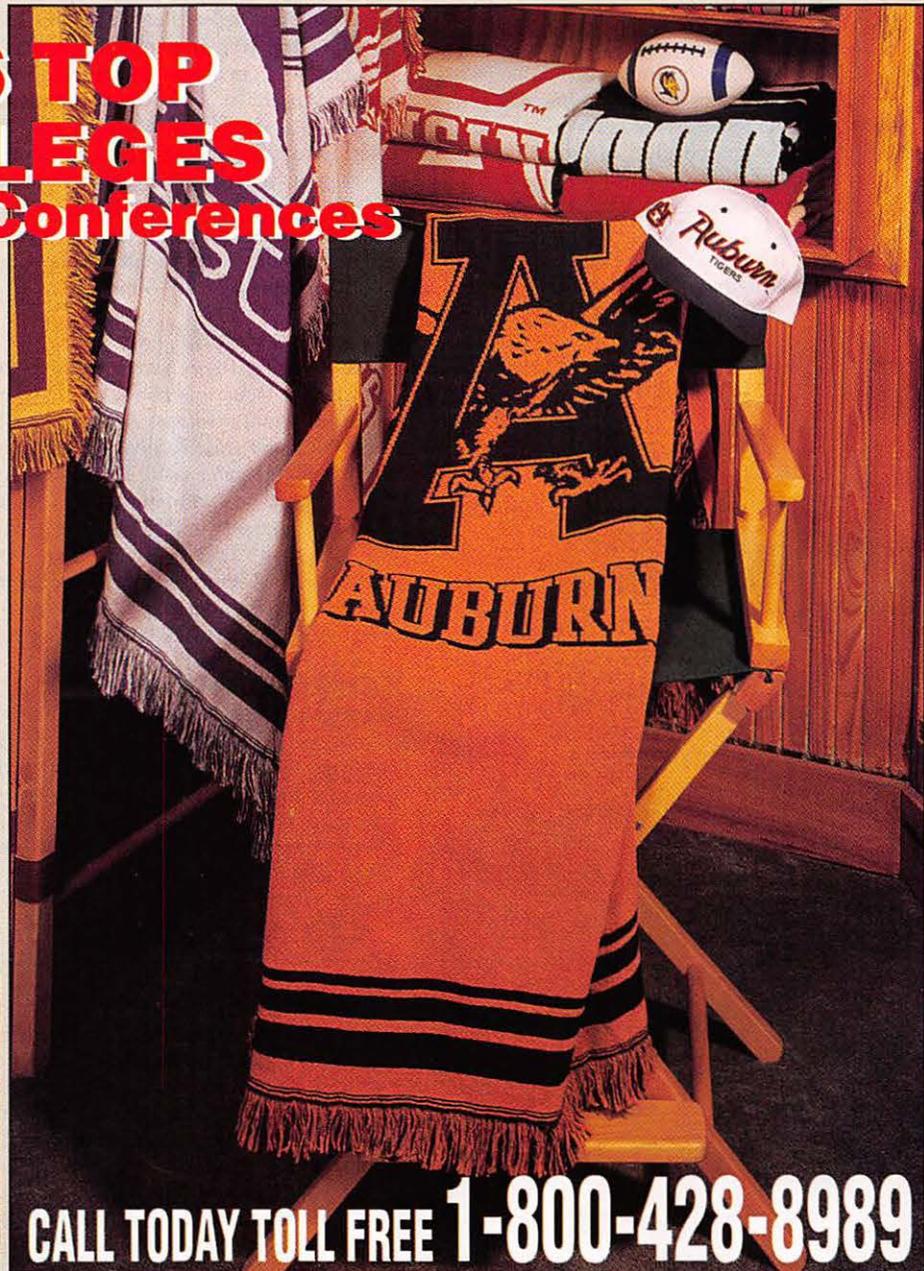
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# In The Huddle

## Scoring is Up as it's Fiesta or Famine

### SOUTHEAST

When arrests, agents and Alliances weren't dominating conversations this fall, the most controversial conversational topic was running up the score. There is no question that more and more coaches of top-flight program spent their Saturdays with one eye fixed on the scoreboard and the other toward the Fiesta Bowl and its \$12 million payout. It takes votes to get rankings, and an increasing number of coaches believe it takes points to get votes.

Scoring was over the top this year in the SEC and everywhere else.

One Saturday alone—Sept. 16th—provided enough evidence to support a case that could even defeat Perry Mason. Only two of the top 10 teams in that week's AP poll failed to score at least 45 points—No. 6 **Auburn** scored six and No. 8 **Tennessee** scored 37—and they both lost.

The remaining eight teams outscored their opponents by a combined total of 495-149, an average margin of 43.3 points per game. There can be no dispute regarding the increase of lopsided scores. Case closed. The defense rests—obviously.

### INJURY WARD

The **Georgia** Bulldogs were bitten by the injury bug so badly that Hines Ward started at three different positions—running back, quarterback and wide receiver—before the season was five games old. But new coach Glen Mason should remember: A 6-5 season despite massive injuries and the departure of Eric Zeier, the SEC's top quarterback last season, was *not* significant improvement enough over 1994's 6-4-1 record—as ex-coach Ray Goff discovered.

### ZERO HEROES

**Clemson** clearly has **Maryland**'s number—in this case, zero. The Tigers, who beat Maryland 17-0, this year, have shut out the Terrapins each of the last three seasons. Clemson is now 8-1 against Maryland since 1986 and has outscored the Terps 59-0 over the last three years.

### MIDWEST

#### HIGH RISE

For the first three quarters of every game during fullback Willie High's career at **Eastern Illinois**, he was the perfect target for enemy defenders. High's upright running style, average speed and propensity for working between the tackles meant he would receive considerable punishment each time he got the ball. By the fourth quarter, however, it was payback time.

Three-yard first-quarter gains

turned into nine- and 10-yard runs later on. It seemed like the man who had been spurned by Big Ten recruiters for being too small and slow was venting his anger and frustration on the Division I-AA tacklers who happened to be in his way.

"When we reach the latter stages of football games, a lot of people get tired," Eastern Illinois coach Bob Spoo said. "Willie is durable enough that he gains strength as the game goes on. He wants the ball."

High gained 4,231 yards during his four years at Eastern, including 1,458 in '95. He recorded 19 100-yard efforts and topped the 200-yard mark four different times, all during a sophomore year that began with a 48-carry effort that set the tone for his rugged career. High rarely broke away from the pack, and his personal highlight package is filled with short, bruising runs rather than dazzling cross-country excursions.

He came to Eastern Illinois from nearby Mattoon, Ill., High when Big Ten recruiters cooled on a 6-foot, 195-pounder who ran up the middle. Though he was disappointed, High devoted himself to strength training and has packed 25 pounds of muscle onto his frame since arriving on campus. His rise to prominence in the Gateway Conference coincided with Eastern's move from a 3-7-1 patsy in his first year to a playoff team in '95.

"I do whatever it takes," High said. "If I have to run over people, that's fine. I'm bigger than a lot of defenders, and when they get tired, I can get past them."

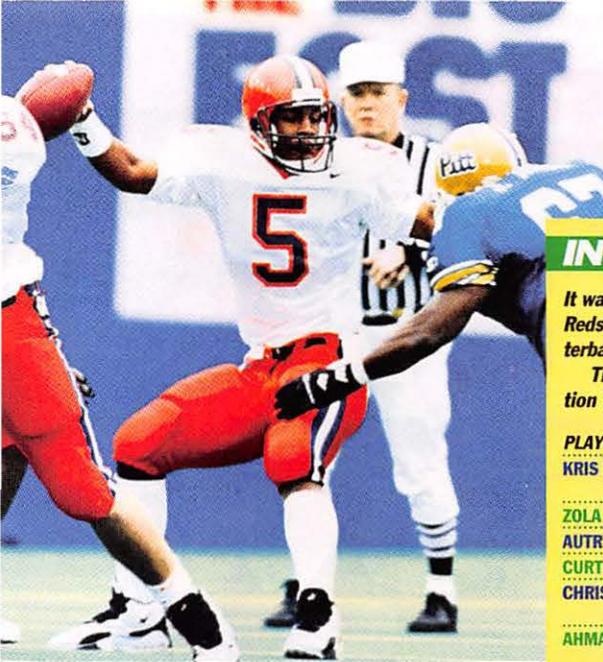
"I like carrying the ball as often as I do because it means I have a bigger part in the outcome of the game. I'd rather have the game on my shoulders than someone else's."

Those who have to tackle High might have

### OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE

For the 12th time in the last 16 seasons, Southeastern Conference teams posted the best record against Division I-A non-conference opponents. Here are each league's 1995 regular-season records:

SEC	27-7	.794
BIG TEN	27-7-1	.786
BIG EIGHT	24-7-1	.766
PAC-10	16-11-1	.589
SWC	16-15-2	.515
WAC	15-16	.484
MAC	13-15	.464
ACC	9-13	.409
BIG EAST	12-20	.375
BIG WEST	10-32	.238



Donovan McNabb strong-armed Syracuse to a successful Big East season.

## INSTANT OFFENSE

It wasn't tough to pinpoint the reason for Syracuse's success this year. It started with every handoff. Redshirt freshman quarterback Donovan McNabb put together one of the best debut seasons by a quarterback, guiding the Orangemen to a third-place Big East finish and an invitation to the Gator Bowl.

This season, a number of first-year eligible players stepped up to make an immediate contribution to their team, including the following 15 players, listed alphabetically:

PLAYER, SCHOOL	POSITION	CS NOTES
KRIS BROWN, Nebraska	K	The nation's 11th-leading scorer—13 of 16 FG and 58 extra points for 97 points.
ZOLA DAVIS, South Carolina	WR	58 catches for 911 yards and 9 TDs.
AUTRY DENSON, Notre Dame	RB	695 yards rushing, 5.1 avg. per carry, 8 TDs.
CURTIS ENIS, Penn State	RB	683 yards rushing, 6.0 avg. per carry.
CHRIS FERENCIK, Pitt	K	Made 12 of 13 FG attempts, converted 23 of 24 extra points.
AHMAN GREEN, Nebraska	RB	A national-best 7.7 yds. per carry; 1,086 yds. on 141 carries and 16 TDs (tied for 12th in the country in scoring).
JEFF HALL, Tennessee	K	Made the most field goals of any freshman (16 of 25) and scored 95 total points.
DEMETRIUS HARRIS, Pitt	RB	A team-high 610 yards rushing, 5 TDs.
DENVIS MANNS, New Mexico State	RB	1,120 yards rushing on 157 carries; the only freshman to average more than 100 yards a game.
SILAS MASSEY, Central Michigan	RB	1,089 yards on 225 carries for 9 TDs.
DONOVAN McNABB, Syracuse	QB	Third in the nation in pass-efficiency; 1,991 yards, 16 TDs passing; 2,252 yards of total offense.
R.W. McQUARTERS, Oklahoma State	WR/DB	Two-way player also returned kicks (27 returns for 645 yards—fourth-best in the nation).
BRANDON STOKLEY, SW Louisiana	WR	75 catches (7th in the nation) for 1,121 yds. and 9 TDs.
RICKY WILLIAMS, Texas	RB	Broke Earl Campbell's school freshman rushing record (990 yards on 166 carries).
KAREEM WILSON, Ohio U.	RB	10 TDs, 893 yards on 244 carries.

a different opinion on the matter. Especially in the fourth quarter.—MICHAEL BRADLEY

## PERFECT EXECUTION

In its biggest game of the regular season, **Nebraska** beat **Colorado**, 44-21, by playing near-flawless football. The Huskers had no fumbles, interceptions and allowed no quarterback sacks. It was also the first Nebraska game since their 1976 clash against **Oklahoma** that the Huskers did not have a penalty.

## FOUR SCORE AND FOUR YEARS AGO

For the second time in four years, a **Michigan** quarterback torched **Minnesota** for a school-record four touchdown passes. Brian Griese's four scoring strikes in the Wolverines' 52-17 victory on Oct. 28 came almost four years to the day that Elvis Grbac lit up the Golden Gophers for four in a 63-13 win on Oct. 24.

Griese and Grbac, who threw four touchdowns two other times in his career, are two of six Wolverine quarterbacks to share the school record. The others were Todd Collins in '92, Michael Taylor in '89, Chris Zurbrugg in '84 and Steve Smith in '83.

## WEST

### NOT PASSED OVER

Why was Steve Rivera, now an owner of a San Carlos, Calif.-based construction company, so happy to see **USC's** Keyshawn Johnson have such a standout year? Because Johnson helped keep alive Rivera's name in the Pac-10 record books.

Rivera, who played for **California**, is the last player to win back-to-back Pac-10 receiving titles; he led the league in 1974 and '75. Only Rivera and **Stanford's** Chris Burford (1958-'59) and Gene Washington (1967-'68) have won consecutive titles.

**UCLA's** Kevin Jordan was unable to add his name to that group this year after leading the Pac-10 in 1994 with 73 catches for 1,228 yards and seven touchdowns. Jordan finished 1995 with 41 catches for 539 yards and two touchdowns, well off Johnson's league-leading numbers.

Johnson, who set an NCAA record with 12 consecutive games of at least 100

yards receiving and finished ninth in the Heisman Trophy balloting, led the league with 90 catches for 1,218 yards and finished second with six touchdowns.

## USC EYES AREN'T SMILING

Notre Dame's 38-10 rout of **USC** extended the team's unbeaten streak over the Trojans to 13—the Irish have won 12 and the two teams tied in 1994. Although the Irish have a mastery of USC, it was Notre Dame's first win over a Top 10 team since its 31-24 victory over Florida State in 1993.

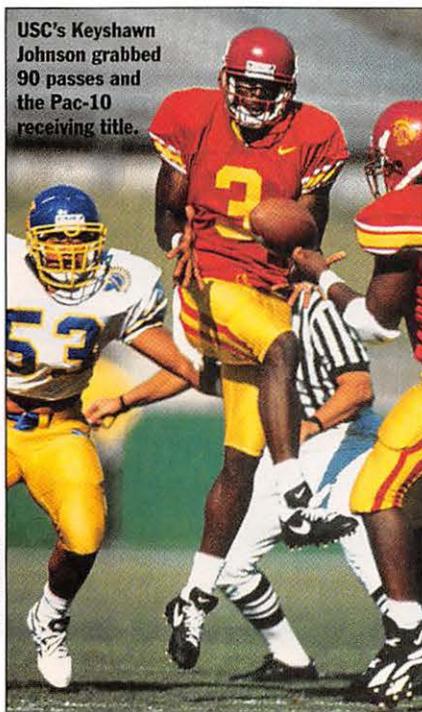
## NORTHEAST

### WHERE THERE'S WILLIS THERE'S A WAY

With one season of eligibility remaining, **Rutgers** running back Terrell Willis has few rushing records left to chase.

Willis became the Big East's all-time rushing leader, passing NFL All-Pro Curtis Martin, who ran for 2,644 yards at **Pitt**. Willis ran for 773 yards this year and finished the season with a career total of 3,114. He also passed Jim Jennings' Rutgers-record of 2,935 career yards.

Willis already is the all-time all-purpose yards leader in the Big East and at Rutgers with 5,340 yards. **CS**



USC's Keyshawn Johnson grabbed 90 passes and the Pac-10 receiving title.

EUGENE GRACIA/SPORT

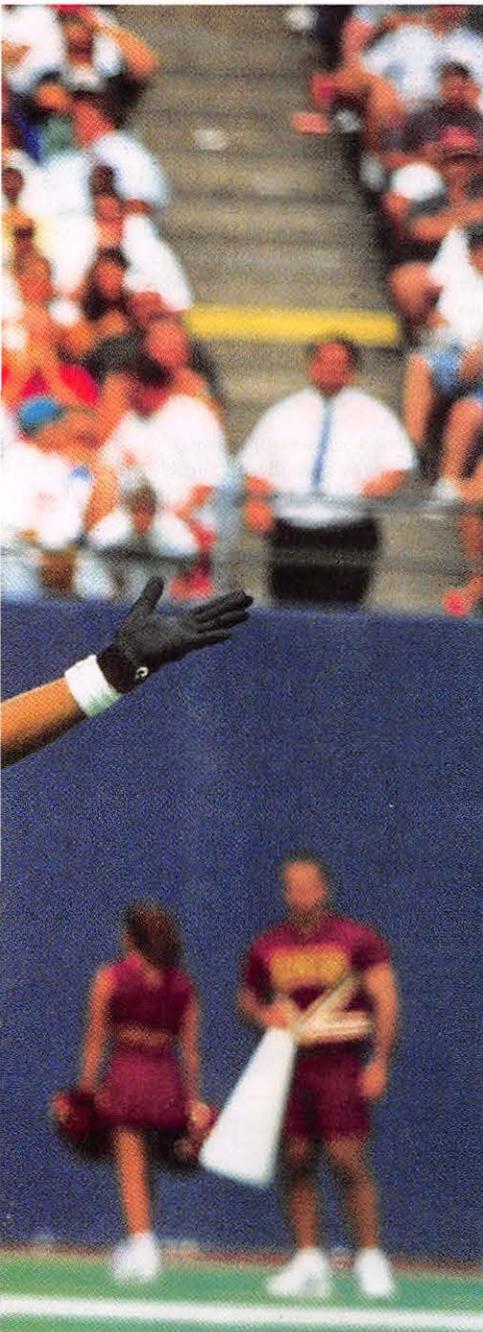
# COLLEGE FOOTBALL

The

# Year in Review



Terry Glenn first caught people's attention—including this official's, who flagged him for excessive celebration—in this year's Kickoff Classic.



## CS Recalls the Memorable Moments of A Season That Featured, Among Other Things, a Cinderella Team, a 2,000-Yard Rusher and the Demise of a Conference.

By **JOHN ROACH** and **DAVID SEIGERMAN**

### UPSET, UPSET AND UPSETTING

September 16 will go down as one of the wildest weekends in Southeastern Conference history. Unranked Louisiana State upset No. 5 Auburn, 12-6, as Troy Twillie intercepted a fourth-down pass in the end zone to seal LSU's first win over Auburn since 1988.

Also, unranked Arkansas, on its way to the SEC West title, beat No. 13 Alabama for the first time ever as quarterback Barry Lunney threw a fourth-down touchdown pass to J.J. Meadors with six seconds left for a 20-19 victory.

Finally, Florida rallied from a 30-14 late first-half deficit to rout Tennessee, 62-37—the most points scored against the Vols since 1893. Quarterback Danny Wuerffel, who went on to break Jim McMahon's single-season pass-efficiency record, needed only 24 minutes, 39 seconds to get the Gators 48 straight points. He went 13-for-15 in that span for 185 yards and five touchdowns—plus he ran for a sixth.

"We knew he was a good player—he'd proven that time and time again," Tennessee defensive coordinator John Chavis said. "With him at quarterback, they may be the most talented team in the state of Florida—period."

Covering another game for ABC that day, Brent Musburger noticed Tennessee's 16-point lead and announced how surprised he was that everyone had figured Florida would win handily while he, of course, thought otherwise. Memo to Brent: Bandwagon jumping is not advisable on national TV.

### LET'S CELEBRATE

Ohio State's Terry Glenn became the first player flagged for excessive celebration this year after he made a diving catch in the Buckeyes' 38-6 rout of Boston College in the Kickoff Classic. Turned out Glenn would have plenty to celebrate as he went on to have a breakout season.

Glenn led the nation's wide receivers with 17 touchdowns and an average of 23.09 yards per reception and finished with 1,316 yards on 57 catches—and just the one flag for over-jubilation. His success this year was hard to miss. For the first time in school history, every Ohio State game was televised either regionally or nationally.

### POLL VAULTING

Forty-two of the 108 Division I-A teams from every conference but the Big West made the *Associated Press* Top 25 this season. While the SEC and Big Ten had the most member teams appear with seven each, the ACC had the best percentage of its teams crack the Top 25. Six of the nine ACC schools made the rankings at one time or another—Florida State, Virginia, Clemson, Maryland, North Carolina and North Carolina State.

Of course, an ACC school had the most dubious distinction this year—the worst final record by a team to appear at least once in the Top 25. North Carolina State finished the year 3-8 after being ranked 23rd in the country in the Sept. 3 poll.

### GIVE 'EM THE BOOT

Purdue's punting unit hardly put its best foot forward in its game against Ohio State. On the team's first three punting situations, Purdue punter Rob Deignan had one punt blocked by Mike Vrabel, didn't have time to attempt the second one and was tackled for a loss, and Ohio State blocked the third punt try—only to have Deignan pick up the loose ball and run for a first down.

To top it off, Purdue attempted a fake punt in the second half, but Deignan's perfect pass to a wide open Lee Johnson fell incomplete when Johnson dropped the ball.

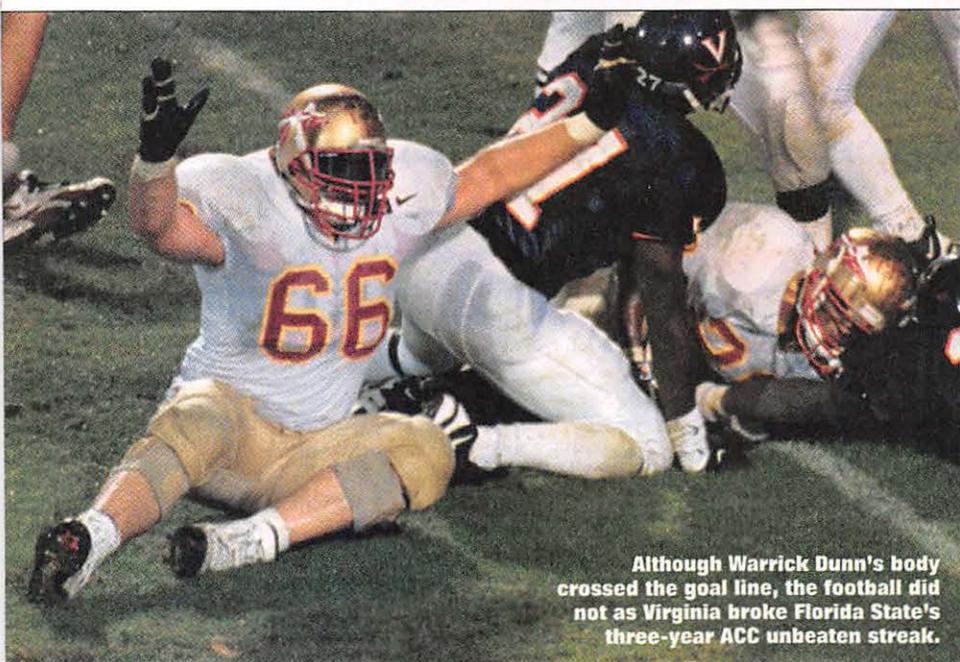
It's no surprise then that of the 20 Boilermakers currently in the NFL, none are punters, and that the school's most well-known former punters are Bob Griese and Len Dawson, a couple of guys who were slightly more successful as quarterbacks.

### CARDIAC CAVS

It was a season of nail-biters in Charlottesville, Va., that would have made Al-

Florida's passing attack flattened Tennessee in one of the year's most exciting games.

DAVID L. GREENE



Although Warrick Dunn's body crossed the goal line, the football did not as Virginia broke Florida State's three-year ACC unbeaten streak.

fred Hitchcock squirm. If they're lucky, Virginia fans will retain the memory of the one shining moment rather than the haunting visions of the ones that got away.

The Cavaliers had blown a 10-point first-half lead and were clinging desperately to a 33-28 lead over No. 1 Florida State in the wee hours of a Thursday night. The Seminoles had never lost a game in their three years of ACC membership, and the 'Noles were in fine position to extend their conference winning streak to 30 games. They had the ball second-and-3 from the 6-yard line in the closing seconds when tailback Warrick Dunn took a direct snap from center, broke a tackle at the line and sliced toward the end zone. He was stopped by linebacker Anthony Poindexter and safety Adrian Blum inches shy of a

game-winning score, securing Virginia's biggest win in recent memory.

"I thought he went across," Cavaliers coach George Welsh said. "I couldn't see the goal line where I was and I thought, 'Oh God, it's going to happen again.'"

Welsh's apprehension was well-warranted since the Cavs lost three games on last-minute plays this year. First, Michigan freshman quarterback Scott Driesbach rallied the Wolverines from a 17-0 deficit to the greatest comeback in school history and an 18-17 victory in the Pigskin Classic. Virginia then lost to North Carolina when its last-gasp drive stalled on the Heels' 37 with 33 seconds left.

And in a Texas game that saw three lead changes in the final 5:03, the Longhorns had the final say when kicker Phil Dawson drilled a 50-yard, buzzer-beating field goal for a 17-16 win. That loss made Virginia only the fourth team since 1971 to lose two games in one season on the final play.

The Cavs' season closed in appropriate fashion as Virginia Tech scored with 47 seconds to play to go up, 30-29. Hokies cornerback Antonio Banks then intercepted Mike Groh and returned it 65 yards for a touchdown and a 36-29 victory on the game's, and the regular season's, final play.

"This was the first season like this that I've ever been around in 30-plus years," Welsh said. "We were competitive with everybody we played. I guess we entertained a lot of people, that's for sure."

## BAD PASS

On a day when Nevada quarterback Mike Maxwell, the nation's regular-season total offense leader, threw for 552 yards and seven touchdowns, the most attention-grabbing throw was made by UNLV defensive back Quincy Sanders, a one-time

Nevada recruit. Sanders made the highlights that day—and gave the spirited Nevada-UNLV rivalry a black eye—when he threw his helmet at Nevada coach Chris Ault during a post-game melee.

His actions only show that besides being a poor sport, Sanders would make a lousy quarterback. Ault was in a crowd, but Nevada wide receiver Alex Van Dyke, who broke Howard Twilley's 30-year-old NCAA record for receiving yards in a season with 1,854 on 129 catches, was probably wide open going deep.

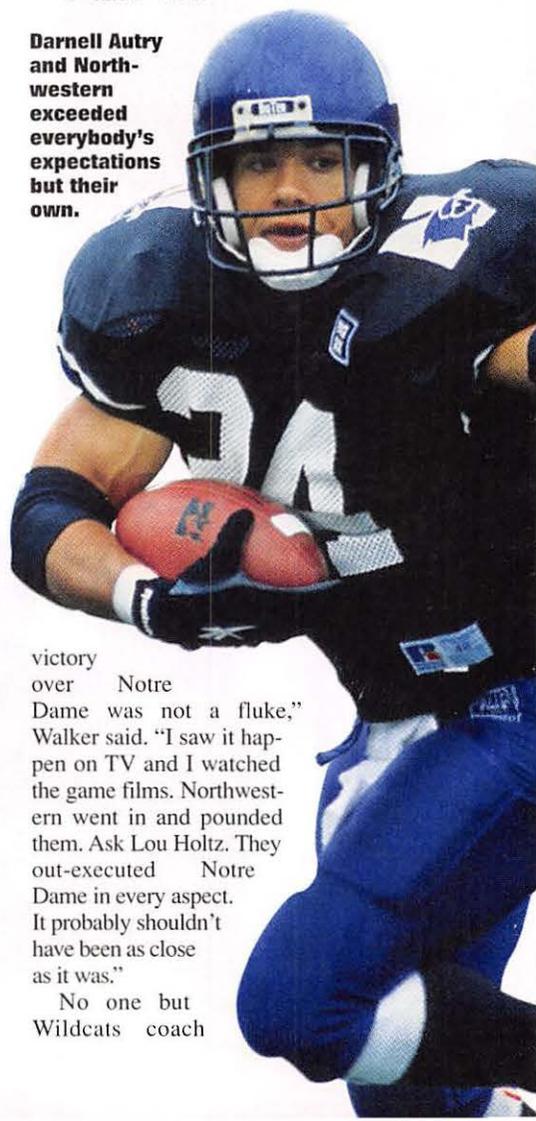
## WILD ONE

Northwestern's season-opening win over Notre Dame was considered the Upset of the Century—for about a week. As it turned out, the Wildcats' loss to Miami of Ohio the following Saturday was the biggest upset of the season and a game that may have saved the Bowl Alliance.

In the final minute, Miami kicked a game-winning 20-yard field goal that was set up by a bad punt snap that sailed over Paul Burton's head and rolled to the 1-yard line. The loss was Northwestern's only one of the regular season, which hardly surprised Redskins coach Randy Walker.

"I knew their

**Darnell Autry and Northwestern exceeded everybody's expectations but their own.**



victory over Notre Dame was not a fluke," Walker said. "I saw it happen on TV and I watched the game films. Northwestern went in and pounded them. Ask Lou Holtz. They out-executed Notre Dame in every aspect. It probably shouldn't have been as close as it was."

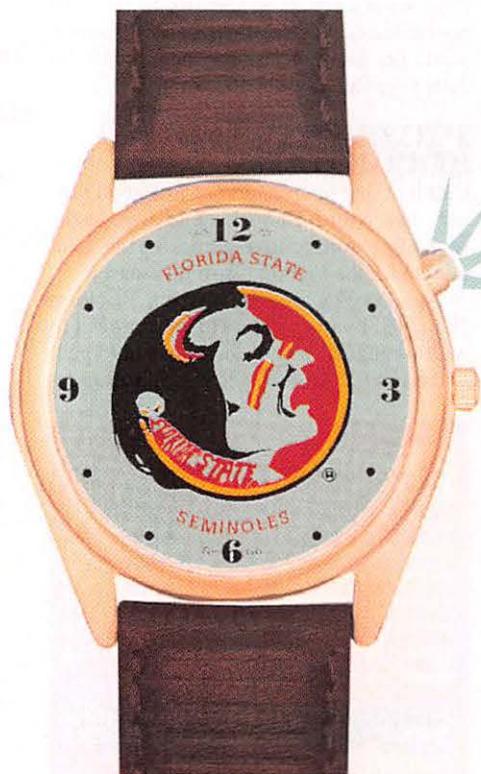
No one but Wildcats coach

## JOB WELL DONE, BY GEORGE

With a nod to a few fellows with exotic names like Troy, Wasean and Darnell, some of the most consistently impressive rushing performances were turned in by a pair of Georges: Ohio State's Eddie George and San Diego State's George Jones. Both finished among Division I-A's top five in total yards, yards per game and yards per carry, and they tied for the lead in rushing touchdowns. Plus, both broke their respective school's single-season rushing records; George, the Heisman Trophy winner, surpassed Keith Byars (1,764 in '84) and Jones eclipsed Marshall Faulk (1,630 in '92).

	EDDIE GEORGE	GEORGE JONES
ATTEMPTS	303	305
YARDS	1,826	1,842
AVG. PER CARRY	6.0	6.0
AVG. PER GAME	152.17	153.50
RUSHING TDs	23	23

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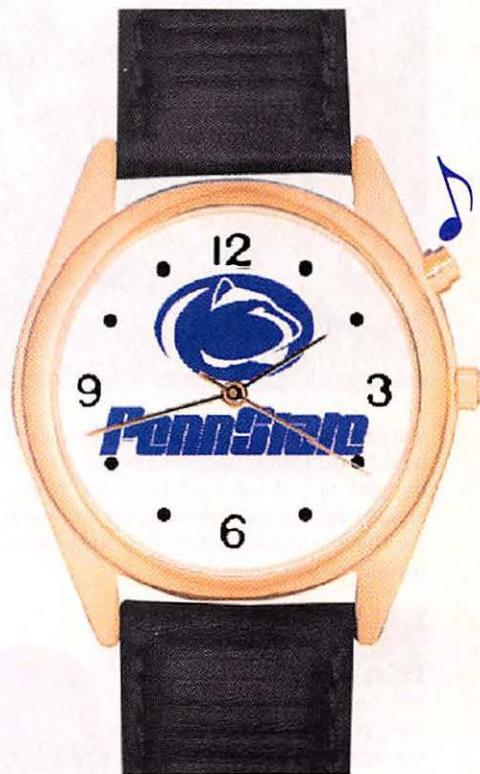
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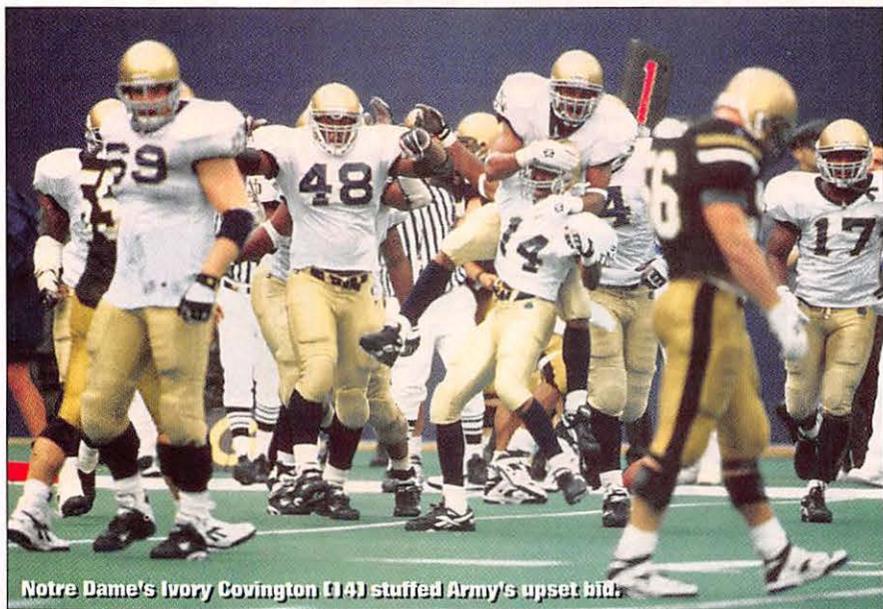
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Notre Dame's Ivory Covington (14) stuffed Army's upset bid.

Gary Barnett had expected Northwestern to beat Notre Dame, and even fewer people thought they'd rebound from the heart-breaker against the Redskins, go on to win the Big Ten and earn their first Rose Bowl trip since 1949.

**LEAVING THEIR BENCH MARK**

Without question, the under-study performance of the year belonged to Colorado sophomore quarterback John Hessler, who was thrust into the spotlight when starter Koy Detmer suffered a season-ending knee injury in the second quarter of a scoreless game against Texas A&M.

Hessler, whose resumé had previously consisted of a handful of mop-up snaps, proved up to the starring role. He completed half of his 20 passes for 177 yards and a touchdown and ran for two other scores as the Buffaloes derailed the Aggies' title hopes with a 29-21 upset.

Whereas Hessler had the biggest impact off the bench this season, the one guy who came close was Virginia trainer Joe Gieck. Virginia Tech cornerback Antonio Banks was in the process of returning a last-second interception for a 65-yard touchdown in the Hokies' season-ending win over the Cavs when Gieck extended his leg and

tried to trip Banks in front of the Virginia bench.

Fortunately, he missed and Banks raced into the end zone untouched.

**JOIN THE CLUB**

Three-hundred-yard rushing games are becoming like personal computers—these days, it seems everybody's got one.

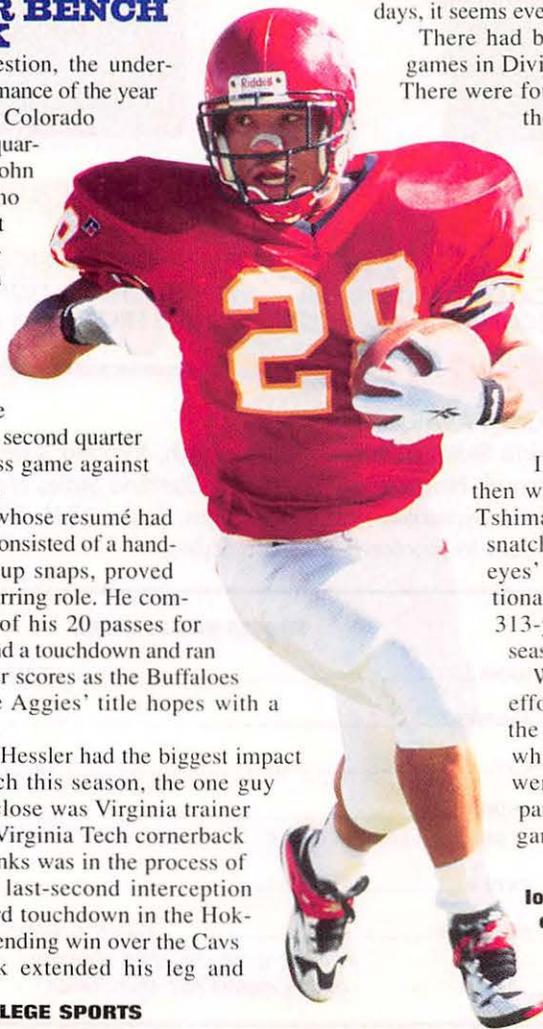
There had been just 38 300-yard games in Division I-A before 1994.

There were four last year, matching the record set single-handedly in '88 by Barry Sanders and tied in '89 by a group of four backs that included Emmitt Smith.

This year, Iowa State's Troy Davis gained 302 yards against UNLV, Ohio State's Eddie George scorched Illinois for 314 and then watched as Michigan's Tshimanga Biakabutuka snatched away the Buckeyes' Rose Bowl and national title hopes with a 313-yard showing in the season finale.

What made this year's efforts so impressive was the competition against which the milestones were set—for the most part. Take away George's game and Illinois would

**Iowa State's Troy Davis cracked the 300-yard barrier against UNLV this season.**



have ranked 17th in rushing defense instead of 36th. Subtract Biakabutuka's day and Ohio State would have jumped from 46th to 26th.

In Davis' case, there may be a reason why he became the first back to rush for more than 2,000 yards and not win the Heisman Trophy. His best day came against a team known for its generosity toward opposing backs. UNLV allowed 278.1 rushing yards per game—perhaps they should be called the Run-On Rebels.

**PRIMARY SECONDARY**

Call it divine intervention or just good timing, but Notre Dame's defensive backs saved two consecutive games in the final minute for the Fighting Irish this season.

Against Washington on Oct. 7, Notre Dame led by one as the Huskies moved to within range of a game-winning field goal at the Irish 33 with 44 seconds left. But de-

**TEAMS GOING UP ...**

Here at CS, we call 'em like we see 'em. In hindsight, though, there are a few instances where we wish we had better eyesight. Still, we weren't all that bad, considering five of our top seven preseason picks would have made it into the three key Alliance Bowls had Miami not gone on probation.

TEAM	PREDICTED RECORD	REGULAR-SEASON RECORD
NORTHWESTERN	2-9	10-1
TOLEDO	5-6	10-0-1
GEORGIA TECH	1-10	6-5
STANFORD	3-8	7-3-1
CINCINNATI	2-9	6-5

**... AND DOWN**

TEAM	PRESEASON RANK	REGULAR-SEASON RECORD
TEXAS A&M	1	8-3
OKLAHOMA	12	5-5-1
ARIZONA	13	6-5
N.C. STATE	18	3-8
SOUTH CAROLINA	24	4-6-1

fensive back Allen Rossum picked off Damon Huard's pass and sealed Notre Dame's 29-21 victory with a 76-yard interception return for a touchdown.

The next week, Army, going for another would-be upset of the decade, rallied from a 28-7 deficit to have a shot at winning as the Cadets tried for a two-point conversion with 39 seconds left. But 161-pound Ivory Covington—filling in for Rossum, who had been injured moments before—stuffed 240-pound Army tight end Ron Leshinski on a brilliant tackle inches short of the goal line.

"I shocked everyone that someone my

size could make a play like that," Covington said. "I really didn't think about his size advantage. When I hit him, I just wanted to get him down quickly."

## DRIVE OF THE YEAR

Kansas, which at the time was unbeaten, pulled off its first victory in Oklahoma in 20 years with an amazing 38-17 victory after rallying from a 14-0 deficit. The victory included a stunning 22-play, 12:08 scoring drive that included an unbelievable *four* fourth-down conversions. "I never, never, ever, ever, ever had a team do that," Kansas coach Glen Mason said. "We haven't been able to do that against air."

## SACKING THE RECORD BOOKS

It was a game only a defensive coordinator's mother could love. Illinois' 9-7 win over Arizona was as much a product of the teams' offensive inadequacies as their respective defensive prowess.

But the offensive displays provided a suitable backdrop for defensive history to be made. In the first half, Arizona's Tedy Bruschi and Illinois' Simeon Rice—a pair of Lombardi Award finalists—both became their conference's all-time leader in quarterbacks sacks. Bruschi passed Pac-10 leader Shante Carver (41 sacks) just after Rice's first sack of the day erased Mark Messner (36) from the Big Ten annals.

Bruschi finished his career with 52 sacks, tying him with ex-Alabama All America Derrick Thomas as college football's best pass rusher. Rice wound up with 44.5 sacks, good for ninth in Division I-A history.

## TOO HOKIE

Looking for proof that college football is as unreliable as your local weather forecaster? A week after being shut out at home, 16-0 by Cincinnati, Virginia Tech went on to stun then-No. 17 Miami, 13-7, to become the first unranked team in 11 years (71 opponents) to beat the Hurricanes. The loss pushed Miami from the Top 25 for the first time in 10 years and left the Big East without a Top 25 representative for five weeks until Syracuse arrived at No. 21.

Virginia Tech used the victory as a springboard to close out the regular season with nine straight victories and a share of the Big East title, finishing the regular season ranked No. 13 in the country and earning a bid to the Sugar Bowl.

## I'M NOT SCHITZOPHRENIC AND NEITHER AM I

Pitt opened the season with a 17-13 upset of Washington State and scored its most points since 1977 in a 66-30 rout of Eastern Michigan the following week.

Then the Panthers forgot how to score—and win. Pitt finished the season with nine



Simeon Rice became the Big Ten's all-time sack leader in Illinois' win over Arizona.

straight losses, including a 29-27 loss to Temple, which snapped both the Owls' 13-game losing streak and their 27-game Big East losing streak. It was Temple's first league win since joining the Big East in 1991.

After its 66-point outburst, Pitt scored just 57 points in its next four games leading up to the Temple loss.

## SWC-YA

For those of you tuned into the Texas-Texas A&M showdown hoping to see the Southwest Conference swan song, you probably missed the official end to the 81-year-old league.

It came at Rice Stadium, where the host Owls and crosstown-rival Houston battled down to the wire before the Cougars won, 18-17. Appropriate for a conference whose reputation had crumbled in the college football community, the end of the SWC came on a missed field goal. The conference that

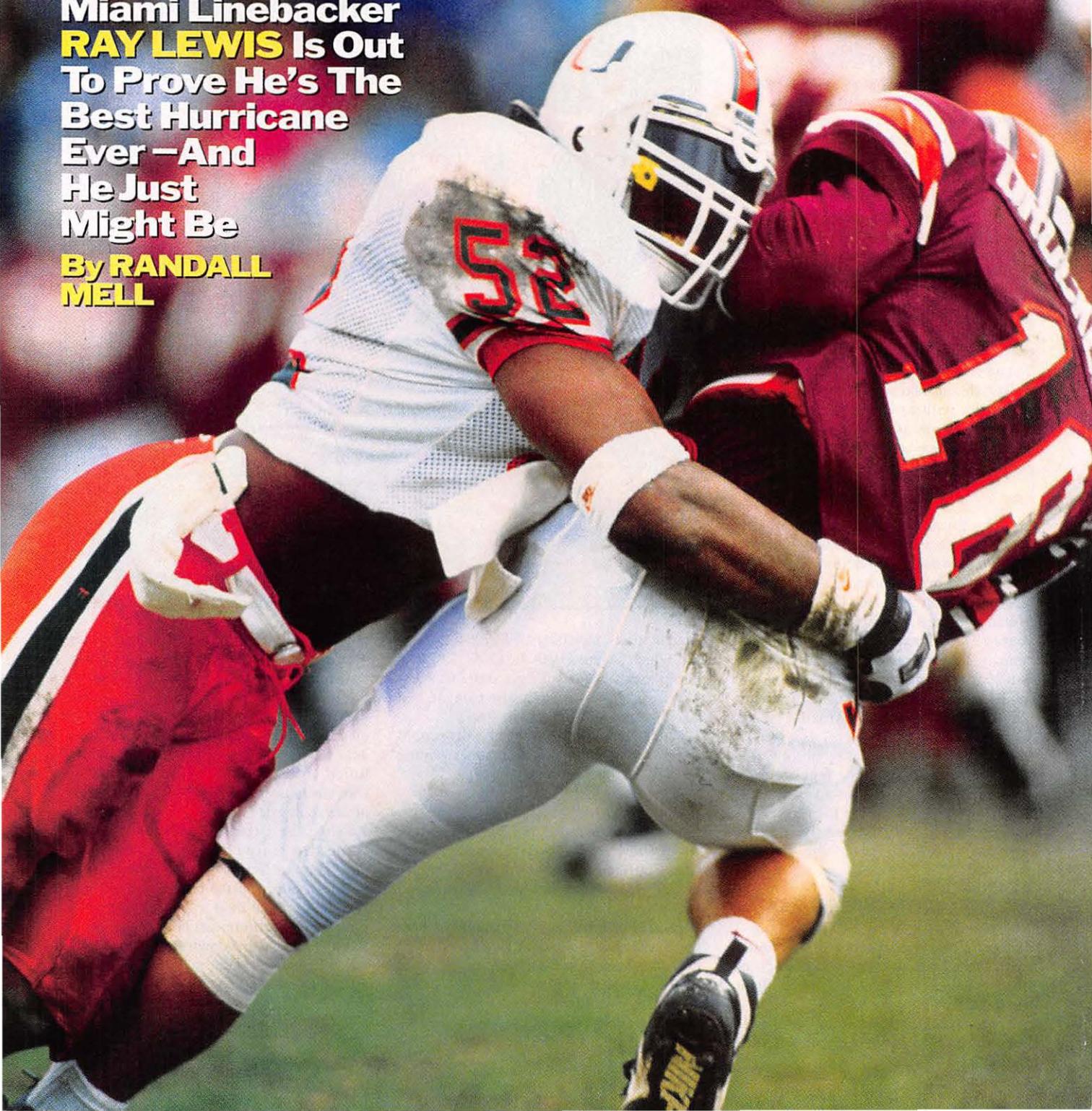
boasted five Heisman winners, though only one in the last 19 years, saw its final touchdown scored on a 43-yard reception by a former walk-on named Larkay James. And the final points resulted when Houston quarterback Chuck Clements scrambled for dear life during a conversion attempt, then lofted a floater back across the field to Damion Johnson, standing all alone in front of the goalpost.

After the game, the two schools exchanged the Bayou Bucket, their annual trophy. Then, officials from the SWC office picked a fan from the crowd and brought him down to the field to pull a ceremonial plug on the conference. Houston resident Randy Brown came down and, with a quick tug, the lights went out in Rice Stadium and on the Southwest Conference. Fireworks began to fill the Houston sky—a fitting finale to a once-bright conference that burned itself out. **CS**

# Making A **Name** For Himself

Miami Linebacker  
**RAY LEWIS** Is Out  
To Prove He's The  
Best Hurricane  
Ever – And  
He Just  
Might Be

By **RANDALL  
MELL**



**R**ay Lewis was racing time and hoping to beat back the worst kind of rejection. If he could beat the clock, he could rewrite the Lakeland, Fla., Kathleen High wrestling records and wipe his father's name from the record book and replace it with his own. If he could do that, maybe he also could wipe out the ache a son feels when a father walks out of his life. Maybe.

Lewis, who may be the best middle linebacker ever to play at the University of Miami, was 16 years old when a referee handed him a book and told him he ought to read it. It was the Kathleen Red Devils Wrestling Book. The book contained a section on school records. There, amid them all, was a name that thrilled and hurt Lewis all at once—Ray Jackson, his father. They called him Big Ray; Lewis was Baby Ray.

Lewis grew up without his father and didn't really know Big Ray, who moved to Louisiana many years before and lost touch with his son. All Baby Ray really knew was that people told him he looked a lot like his father. Lewis was raised by his mother, Sunseria Foster, but he also lived with his grandmother and grandfather. When fathers wore their sons' jerseys to the high school games, Lewis' grandfather wore his No. 22. Baby Ray didn't spend a lot of time thinking about it, but sometimes he wondered where Big Ray was.

Then the wrestling book was handed to him and he saw a way to strike back. He would break all of his dad's records, some of which had stood for 20 years. They were all within reach, except maybe for one—fastest pin. Big Ray had pinned an opponent in 20 seconds. Baby Ray knew that one would take some doing to beat.

Then, as a senior, Baby Ray attacked an opponent's leg, dumping him instantly and swarming over him. When Baby Ray heard the referee slam the mat, signaling a pin, he pivoted toward the clock. It beamed, "0:09." Baby Ray had his record, his dad's last record. "I've got all the records," Lewis said. "That was important because someday I want to take my son and show him the same wrestling book and have the records in my name, not in my father's. My son won't know him. Why would he? I don't know him."

Lewis became the school's first state champion, winning the 189-pound division. A 13-foot photo of Lewis hangs in the Kathleen High gymnasium in honor of that feat.

Lewis is driven to excel and a small part of his success has been a quest to outdo his father, who also starred on Kathleen's football team. Big Ray was a defensive back, and that's where Baby Ray started out as a sophomore, before he grew to be bigger than his father and was moved to middle linebacker. Ironically, Kathleen's head coach,

Ernest Joe, played football with Ray's father. "Ray is the spitting image of his father," Joe said. "His dad was a great athlete, but Ray did more things on a football field."

The more Baby Ray learned about his father, the more he wanted to outdo him. Lewis played both ways and then some in high school. He was a middle linebacker, fullback, tailback, punt and kick returner. In his last two years at Kathleen, Lewis made more than 200 tackles and had 10 sacks, eight interceptions and recovered five fumbles. He returned four punts for touchdowns, three interceptions for touchdowns and rushed for eight TDs as a senior. He also blocked five kicks.

"He is the best athlete I ever coached," Joe said. "I used him every way possible. I used him until you thought he would have



**Lewis' impact has been felt since his 17-tackle performance against Colorado as a freshman.**

dropped, but he never did. He wanted to play all the time. It was his idea."

So, when it was time for Lewis to go to college, Joe wasn't surprised that nearly all the major schools wanted him. Lewis, however, wanted Florida State. The Seminoles initially pursued him, too, until Lewis failed to meet the minimum SAT score by early summer after his senior season.

After the 'Noles gave away their last scholarship, Miami called. Lewis achieved his score later that summer, became a Hurricane and arrived for his freshman year with little fanfare, though that would quickly change.

Lewis stormed into workouts, impressing coaches and climbing to No. 2 on the depth chart as a middle linebacker in a week's time. When the starter was injured before a big game at Colorado early in 1993, Lewis was thrown into the fire. The true freshman responded with a game-high 17 tackles. He was everywhere. Afterward, when reporters asked Lewis if he had surprised himself with his

play, Lewis shrugged. Of course not, he said. "The way I put it, and you can quote me, I might be the greatest player ever to walk out of Miami," Lewis said.

Lewis was just 17 years old when he said that. Older teammates shook their heads. Yeah, they thought, he's already a 'Cane. The talent, the attitude, the bravado. Yeah, he's got all the makings of a great 'Cane. This he would prove over nearly three years as a full-time starter.

## **Lewis began this past**

season, his junior year, as one of the nation's most heralded linebackers. At 6-foot-1 and 230 pounds, he's a little on the light side for an NFL inside linebacker, though he certainly doesn't think so. "Linebackers are overrated because of their size," Lewis said. "Size doesn't make a man, only the size of his heart."

Lewis was on five preseason All-America teams, including COLLEGE SPORTS', and he quickly lived up to his billing. He led the team in tackles for a second straight year and extended his streak of leading the 'Canes in tackles to 21 straight games. This fall, Lewis also intercepted two passes, returning one 64 yards for a touchdown. He would finish as one of three Butkus Award candidates, the honor annually given to the nation's top linebacker.

First-year coach Butch Davis learned quickly that the accolades being heaped on Lewis in the preseason were not all hype. "Ray Lewis does something almost every practice that lights everyone up," Davis said. "He is truly an unselfish and hard-working individual and a great team leader. Sometimes, you inherit players with national reputations and you are concerned whether they really have the intangibles. But Ray made it clear in the first three days of practice he had everything."

Lewis once said he believed he could make 30 tackles in a game. His career best is 22, against Washington in 1994. If you are a ballcarrier, you will meet Lewis. He will hunt you down. And sooner or later, he will end up staring down at you, another tackle in his hip pocket. He has made more than 400 in his Miami career and needs just 80 more in his senior year to surpass George Mira Jr. as the school's career leader.

A player in on that many hits tends to get noticed. When Tampa Bay Buccaneers defensive tackle Warren Sapp played in front of Lewis at Miami last year, he said, "With Ray back there, it's tough for the rest of us to make a tackle. All we get are scraps. He's all over the field like a crazy man. He's around the ball every play. I don't know how he gets there, but he keeps showing up. It's sickening." Teammate Twan Russell, another linebacker, said, "There are times in games I wish we had replay on the field," Russell said.

Florida State coach Bobby Bowden compared Lewis to Marvin Jones, the New York Jets linebacker and former Butkus Award

# Making A Name

winner who was probably the best linebacker ever to play at FSU. "He's making the same kind of impact that Marvin made for us," Bowden said. "He's just like him."

Greatest Miami player ever? That will be left for football historians to decide. There is, after all, a heady field to conquer: Jim Otto, Jim Kelly, Bernie Kosar, Vinny Testaverde, Ted Hendricks, Rubin Carter, Jerome Brown, Cortez Kennedy, Russell Maryland, Michael Irvin. And the list goes on.

Greatest Miami linebacker ever? That may be an easier call. "I've had the pleasure of coaching two Super Bowl champions and one national championship team," Davis said. "Ray Lewis is as fine a linebacker as I've had the pleasure of being around on any level. He's a tremendous inspirational leader. He's a fierce competitor. He's got a burning desire to make every single play."

Before Lewis, Miami had just three *Associated Press* first-team All-America linebackers in the 70-year history of Hurricanes football: Harold Sears (1971), Jay Brophy (1983) and Maurice Crum (1990). Ted Hendricks was an All America, but he was a defensive end for the 'Canes. Lewis is driven to surpass all of them. He is one of those obsessively competitive athletes who must win at everything, including cards.

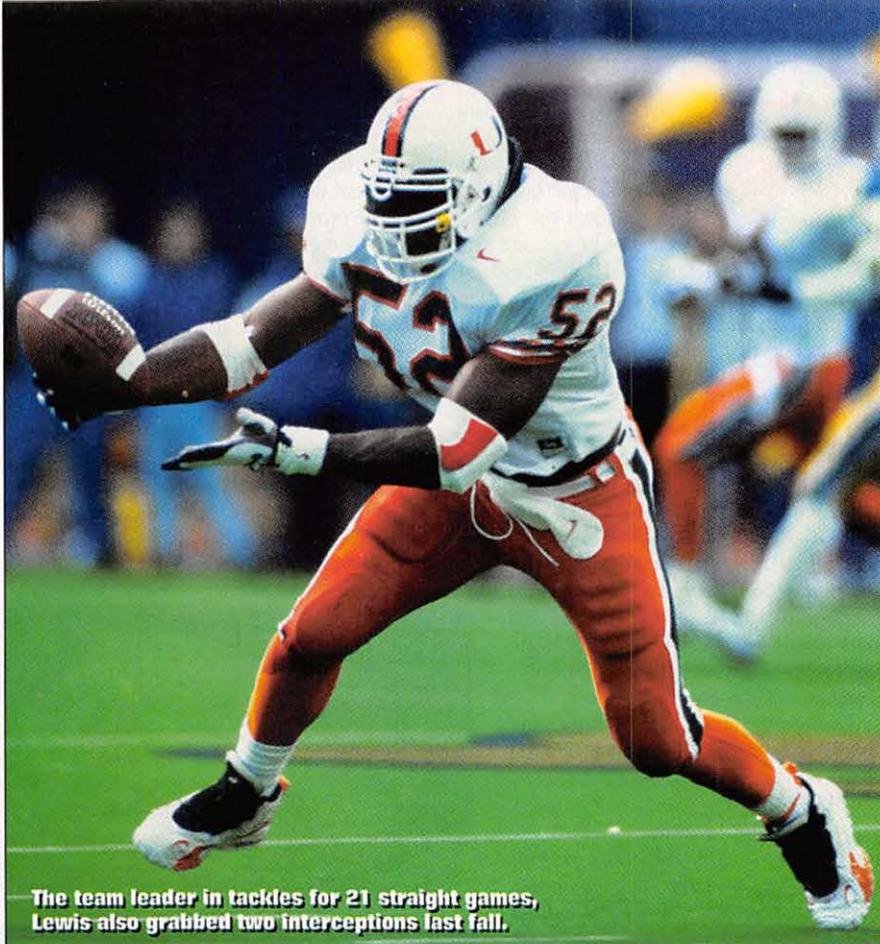
After practice, maybe once a week, Lewis and his buddies will get together at his apartment and play an incredibly simple card game. There's no money at stake, just push-ups. Teammates Dennis Scott, Trent Jones and Jeffrey Taylor are frequent playing partners. Somebody flips a card. The four wait anxiously—a king or queen means they will all drop to do 10 pushups. An ace prompts them to drop and do 20. A numbered card equates to 35 pushups.

They go until one player quits; he's the loser. Usually, nobody drops out until they reach 300 pushups. Lewis is still waiting to lose for the first time.

**Lewis grew up knowing** discipline—his grandfather's. He welcomed it. In fact, he enjoyed regimentation so much he signed up for ROTC in high school and took pride wearing an impeccably creased uniform and spotlessly shined boots to school. He rose to captain, the top ranking officer at his school. He also was a young deacon at the Greater Faith Baptist Church and sang in the choir.

But the upright, noble image that followed Lewis to Miami got ruffled the night of Sept. 13, 1995. Hurricanes fans watching TV that night were treated to a report that Lewis was being investigated for possible battery.

Lewis had stepped into an argument between a current girlfriend and a former girlfriend, and suddenly all of Miami—and the



BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN

The team leader in tackles for 21 straight games, Lewis also grabbed two interceptions last fall.

nation—was hearing about it. The Coral Gables Police Department report said Lewis was swearing and threatening people outside the campus apartment where the argument took place and that he grabbed the shoulder of Kim Arnold, his ex-girlfriend, scratching her when she pulled away. Arnold was pregnant, which would complicate matters, although she said that Lewis is not the father of her unborn child. She was so upset later that night, she said she visited a nearby hospital.

"[Doctors] said her condition may have been more from the stress of the whole situation than from Ray actually grabbing her," said Michael Washington, a friend of Arnold's and a witness to the event.

Months after the incident, no charges had been filed, though police said their investigation remains open. Lewis, who hired an attorney, has been advised not to discuss the incident.

"Ray handled it extremely well," said Davis, who, after weighing all options, chose not to suspend Lewis. "Ray did exactly what the university instructed players to do back in the summer if there was any type of potential allegation—to go immediately to campus police. It was a domestic argument, and that's all there was, truly, just an argument."

The season initially turned sour on Lewis, too. The 'Canes lost three of their first four games and dropped out of the Top 25 for the first time in more than a decade. For mighty Miami and its players, it was soul-searching time. "You look at yourself in the mirror and say, 'Do I want to just turn this season in at 1-3 and lay down or do I want to prove

something to people?'" Lewis said. "Do we want to be remembered as a team that fought back, turned things around?"

Lewis fought back, helping the 'Canes win their last seven games and edging closer to his goal of becoming the greatest player ever to play at Miami. "It is a statement I made from my heart," Lewis said. "And to make that statement you have to come to practice prepared to practice hard and play hard."

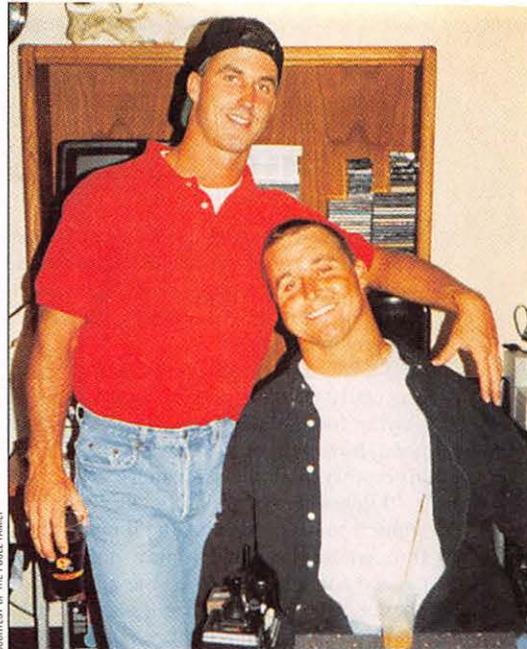
While Lewis continues to master the game of football, it is the game of life that continues to present the most difficult challenges. His father called him out of the blue after that big game as a freshman against Colorado, but Lewis has no desire to strike up a relationship now. "I have no desire to reconcile with somebody who was never there when I was young," Lewis said.

So, Lewis keeps moving forward—Baby Ray is now a father himself. He is a single parent, too. He has a 5-month-old son, Ray Anthony Lewis, and spends much of his free time with his boy, whom he calls "Shorty." He wants very much to spend the time with him that he never got with his father. "Sometimes, when things are down, I'll look at him and he will smile and everything brightens up," Lewis said.

This is the boy he will be around to raise, the one he'll someday hand that wrestling record book with his name in it. And if Baby Ray's son replaces one Ray with another in the book, Lewis will make sure he's there to see it. **CS**

Randall Mell is a staff writer for the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel.

# SIBLING REVELRY



COURTESY OF THE POOLE FAMILY



Poole, who once gave up football, has emerged as one of the Pac-10's top players.

OTTO BREDEL/SPLASH

## With Inspiration From His Paralyzed Brother Marc, Arizona State Star KEITH POOLE Is Living Out Their Dream

By JONATHAN DALTON

**M**arc Poole always played the role of big brother to a 'T'. When Keith, his younger brother by two years, wanted to play football in the family's made-for-football 40x40-yard treeless front yard, Marc and his friends would happily knock him around until the game ended in the inevitable brotherly fight. And when Keith earned most valuable player honors in a seventh-grade football league, Marc was quick to remind his sibling that, because of his advanced size, he was more like an eighth-grader who wasn't playing with kids his own age.

"I gave him hell for that," Marc said. "I told him that if I was an eighth-grader playing on a seventh-grade team, I'd be the MVP, too. It was always a competition thing. We basically played football every day in the front yard and it never ended on an easy note. Keith kept up with us, and being two years older, you can't take that."

The football games between the Poole brothers ended in 1989. While returning home from a weekly football dinner, Marc—then a junior outside linebacker for Clovis, Calif., High—and his best friend were involved in a terrible auto accident.

# SIBLING REVELRY

Marc's friend was killed; Marc was permanently paralyzed from the chest down and spent six months recovering and rehabilitating in the hospital. He currently has limited mobility in his arms.

But Marc never stopped pushing Keith, especially once his brother decided to stop playing football after eighth grade. By that point, however, Marc's reasons for goading his brother to excel had changed.

"I knew he was good, though I wouldn't admit it to him," Marc said. "It was a situation where I couldn't play anymore. I needed something to keep me going and I knew Keith could play. I guess it was selfish for me to ask him to play, but I knew he was good."

Fortunately for the Arizona State football program, Marc convinced Keith to start playing football again. Keith returned to the game as a high school sophomore, and as a senior caught 61 passes for 23 touchdowns and 1,708 yards—at the time, the fourth-highest yardage total in high school football history. He was recruited by California, Fresno State and Brigham Young, but chose Arizona State when current Sun Devils coach Bruce Snyder left Berkeley for the Valley of the Sun near the end of the recruiting period. "I just felt like I needed to get away from Fresno," Keith said. "I wanted to play in the Pac-10."

While his grit and determination were apparent on any ball thrown his direction during preseason drills at Camp Tontozona, the 6-foot-2, 188-pound redshirt freshman was buried on the Sun Devils' depth chart as the fourth receiver in a three-receiver offense. He finished the 1993 season with just seven receptions for 112 yards—a less-than-auspicious debut for the player who would eventually become the go-to man in the Arizona State passing attack.

Not much was expected to change for Poole as a sophomore, at least not until a series of physical and academic problems beset Arizona State's receiving corps. Both Johnny Thomas, the projected deep man, and big-play threat Jason McCorvey failed to qualify academically and left school. Then Troy Rauer suffered an ankle injury, leaving Snyder with only senior Clyde McCoy and Poole to turn to.

Dubbed "White Rice" by his teammates for big-play ability similar to that of San Francisco 49ers superstar Jerry Rice, Poole quickly made his presence felt. After catching five passes for 90 yards in Arizona State's first two games, Poole warned to the starter's role with seven receptions for 119 yards against Cal, including a 66-yard touchdown from quarterback Jake Plummer.

In typical big-brother fashion, Marc, who watched the game from the stands, said he was the person who harvested Keith's knack

for making the big play. "I take credit for some of his speed because I don't know if he would be as fast if I hadn't always been chasing him," Marc said.

By the time Arizona State's 3-8 1994 season had ended, Keith had established himself as one of the conference's best receivers, averaging a league-high 21.6 yards per catch. He finished the season with 31 receptions for 669 yards and six touchdowns. "I think [the coaches] finally noticed what I could do, so they tried to give me the ball as much as they could," Keith said.

During the past summer, Poole emerged as one of Arizona State's leaders. Plummer and Poole convinced their teammates that the Valley of the Sun was the place to be during the summer months, despite temperatures that approached 120 degrees. And the Sun Devils weren't exactly laying around the pool; instead, they were logging extensive hours both on the practice field and in the weight room.

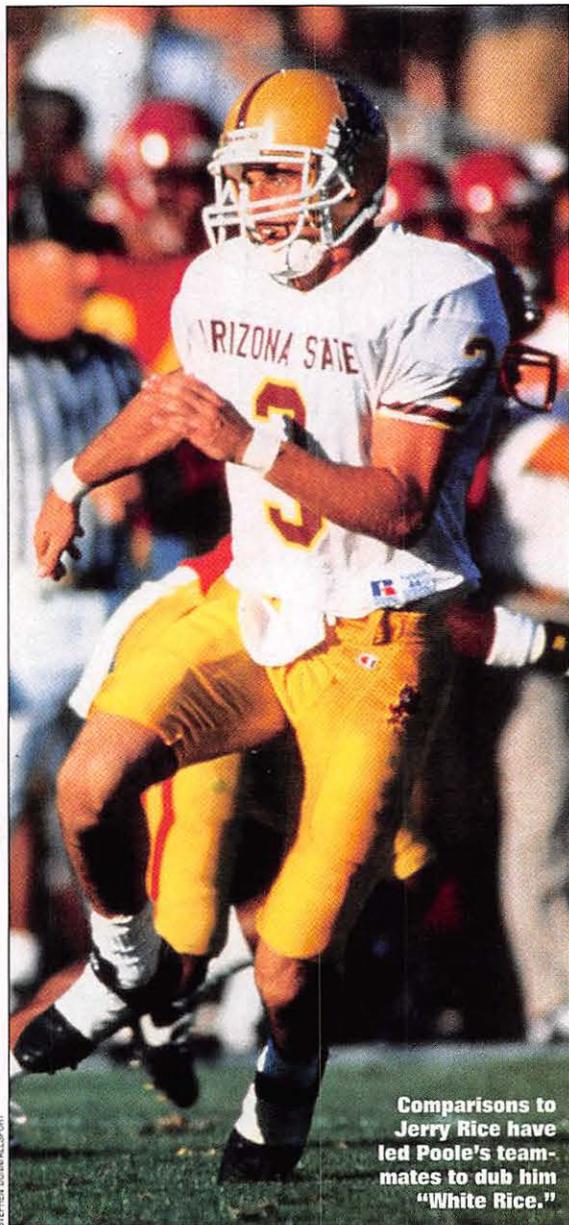
"Almost 80 or 90 percent of the team stayed out here and we worked out together," Keith said. "Usually, we've all gone home and sat around for the summer, but we were dedicated this year."

The workouts helped the Sun Devils improve to 6-5 in '95. Poole almost doubled his output and was named first-team All-Pac-10 along with USC's Keyshawn Johnson. Poole led the league with seven touchdown receptions—he scored two other times on reverse hand-offs—and again had the Pac-10's highest yards-per-catch average (18.8).

His 1,036 receiving yards on 55 catches were the third-highest total in Arizona State history, ahead of such eventual NFL stars as John Jefferson, Charley Taylor, Aaron Cox and J.D. Hill. Poole now needs just 1,170 yards next season to pass Jefferson as the school's all-time leader.

"It was a slow process finally getting to be a starter, but I think it's something a lot of people have to go through," Poole said. "I always dreamed about it, but I never thought I'd be considered one of the better players in the Pac-10."

Poole had another motivation to remain in Tempe last summer. Marc, who had been attending a junior college in California, transferred to Arizona State in January. Attending Arizona State had been a dream of



Comparisons to Jerry Rice have led Poole's teammates to dub him "White Rice."

Marc's since New Year's Day 1987, when he watched the Sun Devils beat Michigan, 23-10, in their lone Rose Bowl appearance.

Marc has since become a mainstay on the sidelines of the Sun Devils' practices and can be found on game nights sitting in the handicapped section of Sun Devil Stadium, right above the north end zone. "I've been able to get out to practice and I go to all the home games," Marc said. "It's something I'm enjoying right now. I'm living independently for the first time in my life and it's just real fun. It's been a few years since we [Marc and Keith] have lived together and I still don't see him every day. If I did, we'd probably get on each other's nerves. But if I need anything, he's there."

In this instance, the one-time rivals are in complete agreement. "It's been great having him here," Keith said. "He's my best friend and my brother." **CS**

*Jonathan Dalton is a free-lance writer based in Mesa, Ariz.*

# CHRIS ROBINSON

## WESTERN KENTUCKY

**F**ormer Jacksonville coach Matt Kilcullen had seen enough of Western Kentucky star Chris Robinson. The Hilltoppers eliminated Jacksonville from the 1994 Sun Belt Conference Tournament with an 83-72 victory behind 30 points by Robinson, then a sophomore, who "just took over the game in the second half," Kilcullen said. "He made every big play down the stretch."

After losing to the "Toppers for the fourth time in five games, Kilcullen finally hit upon a way to stop getting beat by the versatile Robinson, last season's Sun Belt Player of the Year. Kilcullen joined him.

The tourney game was Kilcullen's last at Jacksonville as he took over for Ralph Willard at Western Kentucky before the '94-'95 season. One key perk to the job—he no longer had to find a way to contain Robinson. "Whether it's gimmick defenses, double-teams or whatever," Kilcullen said, "he's always the focus of the other team's defense."

Kilcullen may have found a way around Robinson, but others aren't so lucky. Behind its 6-foot-5 guard, Western Kentucky posted the second-best winning percentage in Division I last year with a 27-4 record and reached the NCAA Tournament for the third straight year. Once there, the Hilltoppers beat Michigan, 82-76 in overtime, before losing by five to Kansas.

Western's success may have surprised others, but not Robinson, who picked the school over Brigham Young and Clemson among others after being named an honorable mention McDonald's All America at Southwest Macon, Ga., High. He first started playing basketball in fifth grade with his cousin, Lester Carr. "We were more like brothers and he kind of pushed me to be the best I could be in basketball," Robinson said. Carr, two years younger, died during Robinson's freshman year. "It was very devastating," he said. "But I decided I was going to do my best and do it for him, too."

His best has been more than enough. Robinson, who averaged 17 points, 6.7 rebounds and 1.9 steals last year, led the Hilltoppers in scoring each of the past two years as they won the Sun Belt regular-season title twice. He's on pace to finish as the school's fifth-leading career scorer—he had 1,342 points going into his senior season—and second all-time in steals.

He also figures to outdo another prodigious scorer—his father, Walter Daniels, who left Georgia in 1979 as the school's

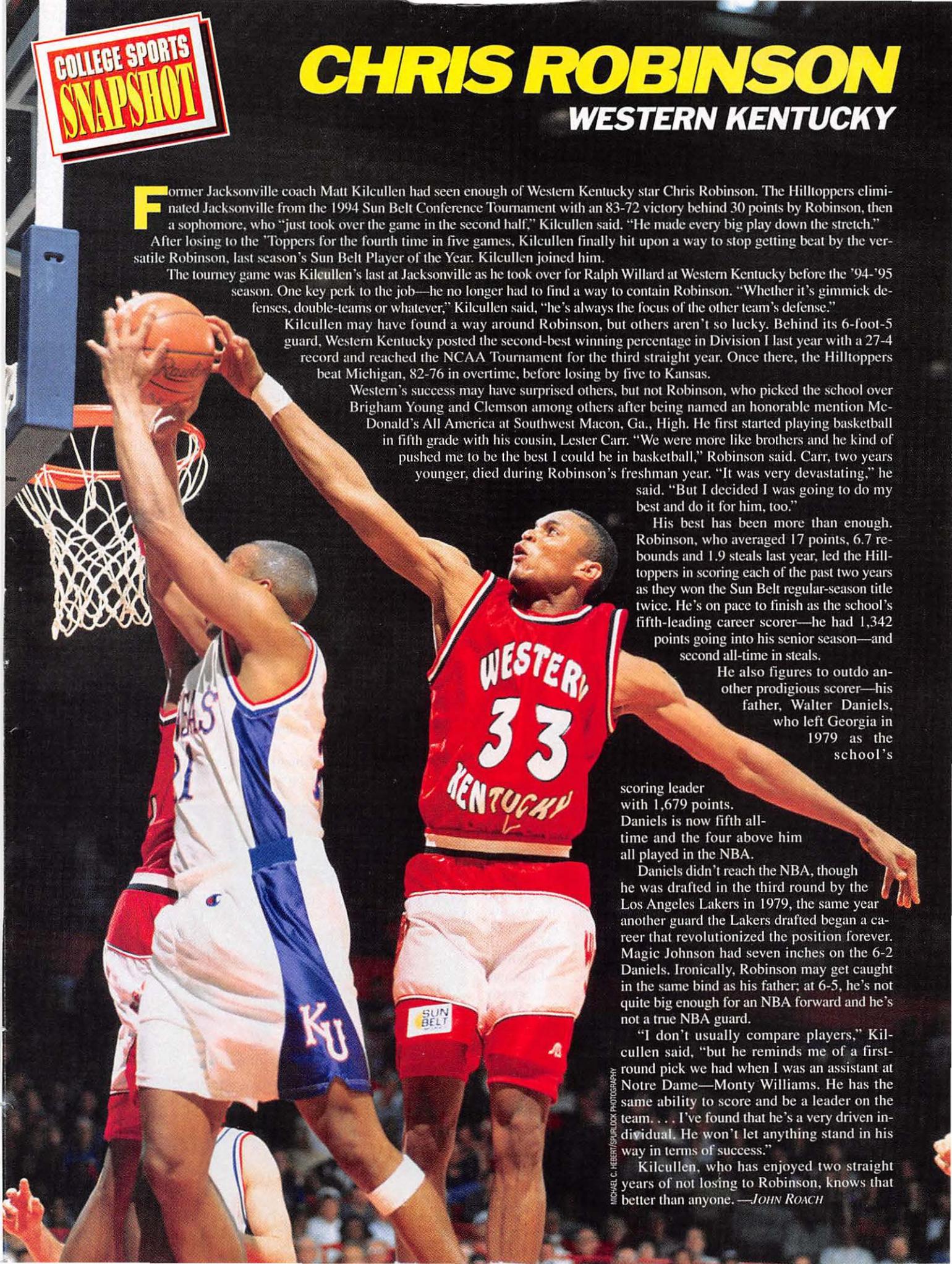
scoring leader with 1,679 points. Daniels is now fifth all-time and the four above him all played in the NBA.

Daniels didn't reach the NBA, though he was drafted in the third round by the Los Angeles Lakers in 1979, the same year another guard the Lakers drafted began a career that revolutionized the position forever. Magic Johnson had seven inches on the 6-2 Daniels. Ironically, Robinson may get caught in the same bind as his father; at 6-5, he's not quite big enough for an NBA forward and he's not a true NBA guard.

"I don't usually compare players," Kilcullen said, "but he reminds me of a first-round pick we had when I was an assistant at Notre Dame—Monty Williams. He has the same ability to score and be a leader on the team. . . . I've found that he's a very driven individual. He won't let anything stand in his way in terms of success."

Kilcullen, who has enjoyed two straight years of not losing to Robinson, knows that better than anyone. —JOHN ROACH

MICHAEL C. HEBERT/SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

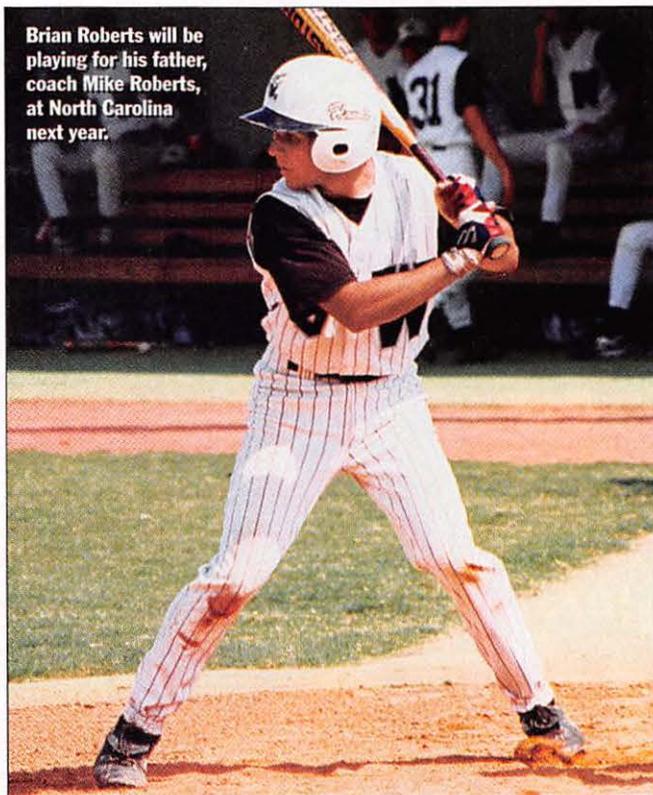


# BLUE CHIPPERS

By **BILL  
BUCHALTER**

## SCOUTING REPORT: High School Baseball Prospects *All in the Family*

**Brian Roberts will be playing for his father, coach Mike Roberts, at North Carolina next year.**



COURTESY OF THE ROBERTS FAMILY

**H**e may not look like the prototypical baseball prospect, but what infielder Brian Roberts lacks in physical attributes he more than makes up for in savvy and guile. It also doesn't hurt that his father happens to coach a Division I team. Just 5-foot-8, 150 pounds, Roberts has been around baseball longer than some major leaguers, and this year his star has risen as a promising prospect at Chapel Hill, N.C., High. That means North Carolina coach Mike Roberts faced some competition when it came to recruiting his own son.

"The pluses [of having a college coach as a father] are being around an atmosphere where you get to study the game more than others," Brian said. "What's really neat is getting to

meet the great people in the game he knows."

While recruiters might prefer prospects to be taller, Roberts brings other qualities to the table that piqued the interest of such baseball powers as Arizona State, Tennessee, Texas A&M, LSU and, of course, North Carolina, which is where Roberts eventually signed. Last summer, the strong-armed, speedy Roberts was one of just 18 high school players selected to participate in the U.S. Olympic Festival in Colorado.

While there are benefits to being the son of a Division I coach, there are negatives, too. "At times, it's a lot harder on me than others," Roberts said. "The pressure to do well is always there, to live up to expectations and to succeed. And everywhere I go, I'm Brian, the coach's son. You're not

always your own person."

While North Carolina's father-son reunion is one of the year's unique stories, scouts continue their search for tall, dominating pitchers. At the top of almost everybody's list is 6-5, 210-pounder Matt White from Waynesboro, Pa., whom many coaches feel will bypass college and go directly to the pros. Georgia Tech, Auburn, LSU and Stanford are among the schools hoping to convince him otherwise. White did not commit in the early signing period and now must wait until the late period, which begins April 10.

White's fastball has been clocked at 91 miles per hour and pro scouts love his work ethic. Last summer, he pitched a seven-inning no-hitter against Italy, striking out 12 of the 24 batters he faced to kick-start the U.S. Junior National team toward a gold medal at the junior world championships.

The tournament also showcased several other top pros-

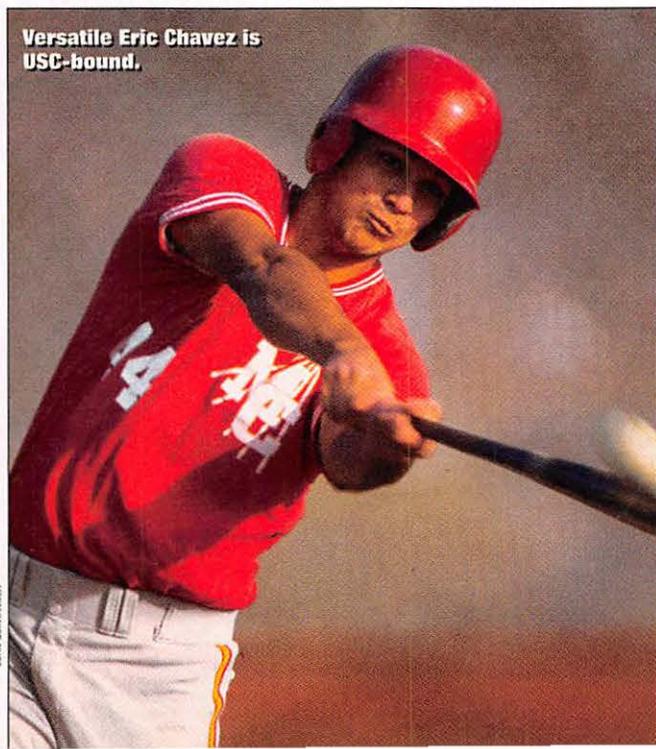
pects. Pitcher/infielder Ryan Oase from Everett, Wash., went 3-0, notched a key save, posted a 1.62 ERA and batted .325, while Gil Meche from Lafayette, La., also picked up a tourney win.

Among the other heavily recruited pitchers are righthander Chris Gissell of Vancouver, Wash., who signed with Texas A&M, Brian Falkenberg of Redmond, Wash., who will attend Oklahoma State, Matt McClendon of Orlando, Fla., who signed with Florida, Shawn Hoover of Louisville, Ky., Patrick Collins of Union, N.J., who will head south to Clemson and Nick Bierbrodt of Long Beach, Calif., who committed to Arizona State.

Scouts feel righthander Al Hawkins of Elizabeth, N.J., is one of the hardest throwers in this year's group. At 6-2, 200, Hawkins reminds them of major league relief ace Lee Smith.

As usual, there are plenty of dual-sport athletes gracing this year's Top 100. Scouts believe Quincy Carter, an outfielder from Decatur, Ga., looks as good in his pinstripes as he does in shoulder pads as one of the nation's Top 10 quarterbacks. The opportunity to play baseball as well as football influenced his

**Versatile Eric Chavez is USC-bound.**



JOHN QUINN/USA

# TOP 100 H.S. BASEBALL PROSPECTS (listed alphabetically)

## PITCHERS

NAME/HT./WT.	HOMETOWN, HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
Mike Bacsik, 6-2/170	Duncanville, Texas	Texas Tech
Brian Beech, 5-10/170	Providence, R.I., St. Raphael Acad.	undecided
Nick Bierbrodt, 6-5/170	Long Beach, Calif., Millikan	Arizona State
Danny Bogeajis, 6-3/195	Longwood, Fla., Lyman	undecided
Patrick Collins, 6-5/230	Union, N.J.	Clemson
Matt Dayley, 6-2/190	Castro Valley, Calif.	Cal
Brian Doerr, 6-3/200	Ralston, Neb.	undecided
Ricky Engelberg, 6-0/180	Winter Park, Fla., Trinity Prep	undecided
Brian Falkenberg, 6-6/175	Redmond, Wash.	Oklahoma State
Ryan Fleetwood, 6-1/170	Cambridge, Md., South Dorchester	James Madison
Joe Fraser, 6-0/190	Anaheim, Calif., Katella	undecided
Jose Garcia, 6-3/175	Chino, Calif., Baldwin Park	undecided
Josh Garrett, 6-4/195	Richland, Ind., South Spencer	Vanderbilt
Chris Gissell, 6-4/170	Vancouver, Wash., Hudson Bay	Texas A&M
Josh Hancock, 6-3/220	Vestavia Hills, Ala.	Auburn
Cody Hartshorn, 6-5/205	Lamar, Colo.	undecided
Al Hawkins, 6-2/200	Elizabeth, N.J.	undecided
Mike Hessman, 6-5/200	Santa Ana, Calif., Mater Dei	Arizona
Michael Hitt, 6-0/155	Jacksonville, Fla., Terry Parker	Jacksonville
Shawn Hoover, 6-7/200	Louisville, Ky., Pleasure Ridge Park	undecided
Jeff Jankowiak, 6-3/190	Plymouth, Minn., Wayzata	undecided
Julian Leyva, 6-1/185	Riverside, Calif., Arlington	undecided
Jason Marquis, 6-0/180	Staten Island, N.Y., Tottenville	Miami (Fla.)
Matt McClendon, 6-6/190	Orlando, Fla., Dr. Phillips	Florida
Gil Meche, 6-1/185	Lafayette, La., Acadiana	LSU
Tony Milo, 6-5/210	Laguna Hills, Calif.	Arizona
Ryan Mottl, 6-0/180	St. Louis, Mo., McCluer North	Clemson
Ben Norris, 6-3/180	Austin, Texas, Westwood	Miami (Fla.)
John Patterson, 6-1/190	West Orange, Texas, Stark	LSU
Bobby Seay, 6-2/185	Sarasota, Fla.	Miami (Fla.)
Kris Stevens, 6-0/180	Fontana, Calif.	undecided
Nick Stocks, 6-4/185	Tampa, Fla., Jesuit	Florida State
Simeon Theodile, 6-4/185	Jeanerette, La.	undecided
Al Thielemann, 6-3/190	Oceanside, Calif., Vista	UCLA
Eric Valenzuela, 6-1/195	Covina, Calif., Bishop Amat	Arizona State
David Walling, 6-5/180	Lakeside, Calif., El Capitan	UC Santa Barbara
Matt White, 6-5/210	Waynesboro, Pa.	undecided
Danny Wright, 6-4/180	Kingsport, Tenn., Sullivan South	Arkansas
Spencer Young, 6-2/175	Cottonwood, Ariz., Mingus	Arizona State
Barry Zito, 6-3/195	San Diego, Calif., University	UC Santa Barbara
David Zwirchitz, 6-2/190	Appleton, Wis., East	undecided

## CATCHERS

NAME/HT./WT.	HOMETOWN, HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
Bobby Brito, 6-0/200	Cypress, Calif.	undecided
Brad Cresse, 6-4/210	Huntington Beach, Calif., Marina	LSU
Lee Evans, 6-1/185	Northport, Ala., Tuscaloosa Co.	undecided
Joey Hart, 6-4/210	Round Rock, Texas	Texas
Josh Hudson, 6-0/180	Columbus, Ga.	Florida
Shaun Kopczynski, 6-3/205	Orlando, Fla., Bishop Moore	Florida State
Eric Munson, 6-2/200	San Diego, Calif., Mt. Carmel	USC
Andy Ness, 5-11, 170	Pilot Point, Texas	Texas A&M
Josh Pugh, 6-0/200	Lexington, Ky., Henry Clay	Mississippi State
Charles Scott, 5-11/200	Lynchburg, Va., Jefferson Forest	Houston
Jeremy Sickles, 6-3/185	Long Beach, Calif., Millikan	undecided
Patrick Williams, 6-1/195	Nacogdoches, Texas	undecided

## INFIELDERS

NAME/HT./WT.	HOMETOWN, HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
Brent Abernathy, 6-0/180	Marietta, Ga., Lovett School	Georgia Tech
Jamie Aloy, 6-1/180*	Maui, Hawaii, Baldwin	undecided
Greg Bauer, 6-1/175	Tulsa, Okla., Jenks	Wichita State
Jim Blanchard, 6-2/180	Grants Pass, Ore.	undecided
Buddy Carlyle, 6-2/180*	Bellevue, Neb., East	Arizona State
Mike Caruso, 5-11/185	Parkland, Fla., Douglas	Miami
Donald Ceaser, 6-7/225	Lake Charles, La., LaGrange	undecided
Eric Chavez, 6-1/195	San Diego, Calif., Mt. Carmel	USC
Chris Delgado, 6-2/200*	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., St. Tho. Aquin.	Miami
Mark Gibbs, 6-1/175	Washington, D.C., St. John's	undecided
Bobby Hill, 5-10/175	San Jose, Calif., Leland	undecided
Orlando Hudson, 5-11/160	Darlington, S.C., St. John's	undecided
Jake Jacobs, 6-5/225*	Pensacola, Fla., Pine Forest	undecided
Jason Kapsner, 6-6/210	Eden Prairie, Minn.	Michigan
Matt Kata, 6-0/170	Cleveland, Ohio, St. Ignatius	Vanderbilt
Joe Lawrence, 6-2/195	Lake Charles, La., Barbe	LSU
Ryan Oase, 6-2/195*	Everett, Wash., Lake Stevens	undecided
Ryan Owens, 5-11/175	La Habra, Calif., Sonora	CS-Fullerton
Raul Reyes, 5-10/190	New York City, N.Y., Washington	undecided
Brian Roberts, 5-8/150	Chapel Hill, N.C.	North Carolina
Jimmy Rollins, 5-8/155	Alameda, Calif., Encinal	Arizona State
Steve Ruggeri, 5-9/160	Herrin, Ill.	Southern Illinois
Jon St. Aubin, 6-0/180	St. Paul, Minn., Cretin-Derham Hall	Bradley
Clint Stoerner, 6-2/196	Baytown, Texas, Robert E. Lee	undecided
A.D. Thorpe, 5-10/155	Durham, N.C., Southern	Clemson

## OUTFIELDERS

NAME/HT./WT.	HOMETOWN, HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
Jonathan Beasley, 6-2/210*	Glendale, Ariz., Cactus	undecided
Milton Bradley, 6-0/165	Long Beach, Calif., Poly	undecided
Dermal Brown, 6-0/200	Newburgh, N.Y., Marlboro Central	undecided
Mike Brown, 5-10/190	Scottsdale, Ariz., Saguro	undecided
Patrick Burns, 6-2,205	Denton, Texas, Ryan	Oklahoma State
Mike Bynum, 6-3/185*	Middleburg, Fla.	North Carolina
Quincy Carter, 6-2/185	Decatur, Ga., Southwest DeKalb	Georgia Tech
Nick Day, 6-2/190	Henderson, Nev., Green Valley	Stanford
Dustin DeLucchi, 5-11/185	Burlingame, Calif., Serra	Arizona State
Rufus French, 6-4/230	Amory, Miss.	undecided
Chris Fulbright, 6-2/190*	Libertyville, Ill.	Texas A&M
Rick Gonzalez, 5-10/180	Tustin, Calif.	undecided
Cedrick Harris, 6-2/175	Ashdown, Ark.	LSU
Brandon Healy, 6-0/185	Carlsbad, Calif.	undecided
Casey Hills, 6-2/210	Federal Way, Wash., Decatur	undecided
Darren Heinrich, 6-3/180	Danville, Calif., San Ramon Valley	Texas A&M
Patrick Kelleher, 6-0/165	Paradise Valley, Ariz., Chaparral	Arizona State
Vernon Maxwell, 5-11/195	Midwest City, Okla.	undecided
Jeff Mull, 6-5/200*	Clarkston, Mich.	Eastern Michigan
John Oliver, 6-2/180	Dallas, Pa., Lake Lehman	Clemson
Juan Piniella, 5-10/160	Stafford, Va., Brook Point	Wichita State
Justin Watts, 6-1/185	South Florence, S.C.	Clemson

\*Also pitches

decision to attend Georgia Tech.

Other top football players on the list of baseball prospects include tight end Rufus French of Amory, Miss., who batted .374 and hits with power; Jonathan Beasley, a pitcher/outfielder from Glendale, Ariz., who is the top quarterback prospect in the Southwest; Mike Brown, an all-state outfielder from Scottsdale, Ariz., who is expected to sign in football as a defensive back; and Jim Blanchard, a shortstop and

.412 hitter for Grants Pass, Ore., who also is one of the Northwest's top quarterbacks.

Many of the nation's top players continue to come from California and Florida. One *Baseball America* report listed the top five talent hotbeds in America and all were located in those two states, led by the Orange County/Long Beach, Calif., area. The Tampa Bay area, which has produced Fred McGriff, Dwight Gooden and Gary Sheffield, was second.

The most sought-after player in the West is Eric Chavez, who has played nearly every position for San Diego, Calif., Mt. Carmel. Chavez, 6-1, 195, was California's Player of the Year as a junior. This year's other top Californians include catchers Bobby Brito of Cypress and Eric Munson of San Diego and outfielders Rick Gonzalez of Tustin and Dustin DeLucchi of Burlingame.

Shaun Kopczynski of Or-

lando, Fla., Bishop Moore leads a large group of central Floridians. Kopczynski batted .531 with five home runs, 13 doubles and 37 RBI, stats that earned him a scholarship to Florida State. Other top area prospects include McClendon, pitcher Danny Bogeajis who helped Lyman win a 6A state title, and pitcher Ricky Engelberg of Trinity Prep. **CS**

*Bill Buchalter is a recruiting analyst for the Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel.*

# DIVISION II Digest

## Grasping His Lesson Plan

■ At Edinboro (Pa.), learning sometimes hurts. It isn't so much the lesson as its illustration, at least when it comes to the teaching technique applied by Bruce Baumgartner, the school's wrestling coach.

Baumgartner knows his trade about as well as anybody in the world, as his NCAA individual title at Indiana State, two Olympic gold medals and three world championship trophies confirm. He will not hesitate to provide painfully clear examples to his wrestlers when need be. "Most coaches get a

little bit of wrestling time with their guys, but this helps me teach them a little better on certain things," Baumgartner said.

Actually, grappling with his wrestlers is a regular element of Baumgartner's training regimen as he prepares for the Summer Games in Atlanta, where he will try to become only the fourth athlete to medal in four Olympiads and earn an unprecedented 13th international wrestling medal. With the biggest of the Fighting Scots serving as sparring stand-ins for the best the world will

throw at him in August, Baumgartner is able to continually hone the skills that have helped him become the most accomplished heavyweight in the history of USA Wrestling.

"I always learn from them. Every time I go out there, I try to pick up new holds or try something out and if it doesn't work, I try to figure out why," said Baumgartner, a sixth-year coach at Edinboro, which competes in Division II in every sport but wrestling. "These guys are better than the guys on the team I was on in college."

### TOUGH NUTT TO CRACK

■ The Sunday twinges are just a thing of Houston Nutt's past. Updates from Chicago Bears games used to trigger brief flashes of "What if?" for Murray State's head football coach. But an 11-1 season has proven to be ample antidote for regret.

Murray State enjoyed its finest season in six decades this fall, which was Nutt's third at the Ohio Valley Conference school. The Racers posted their first undefeated regular season since 1933, finished No. 4 in the final I-AA poll and nearly won their first postseason game ever. They had the OVC's Offensive Player of the Year in tailback Derrick Cullors, a TCU transfer who was second in the nation with 1,765 rushing yards, and Defensive Player of the Year in cornerback William Hampton, who returned four of his eight interceptions for touchdowns. Morale reached an all-time high in the locker room and across campus. "It was hard to believe that at the end of November and December, people around here were still talking football," Nutt said. "Usually, it would be mid-October and they'd be talking hoops."

The surprising turnaround justifies Nutt's decision to stay at Murray State. He was the receivers coach at Arkansas when

### SETTING THEIR PICKS

■ It would be tough to find a more visible and qualified panel to predict the women's basketball Final Four than the U.S. national team. The 11 players participated in a combined 39 NCAA Tournaments during their collegiate careers. Here's how they and the Team USA coaches handicap this year's field:

UConn .....	12 votes
Stanford .....	11
<b>TENNESSEE</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Louisiana Tech .....	10
Georgia .....	5
<b>VIRGINIA</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Colorado .....	1
Kansas .....	1
Vanderbilt .....	1

he accepted the Racers' head job in the summer of '93. Nutt had assembled his staff and was settling into his new surroundings when he got a call from Dave Wannstedt, who had just been hired to replace Mike Ditka in Chicago. Nutt and Wannstedt had been assistants together at Oklahoma State, paying their respective dues on Jimmy Johnson's staff in the early 1980s.

"If I had been an assistant anywhere else, I would have gone," Nutt said. "But I had just uprooted all my assistants and got them all here. It was a tough, tough, tough decision."

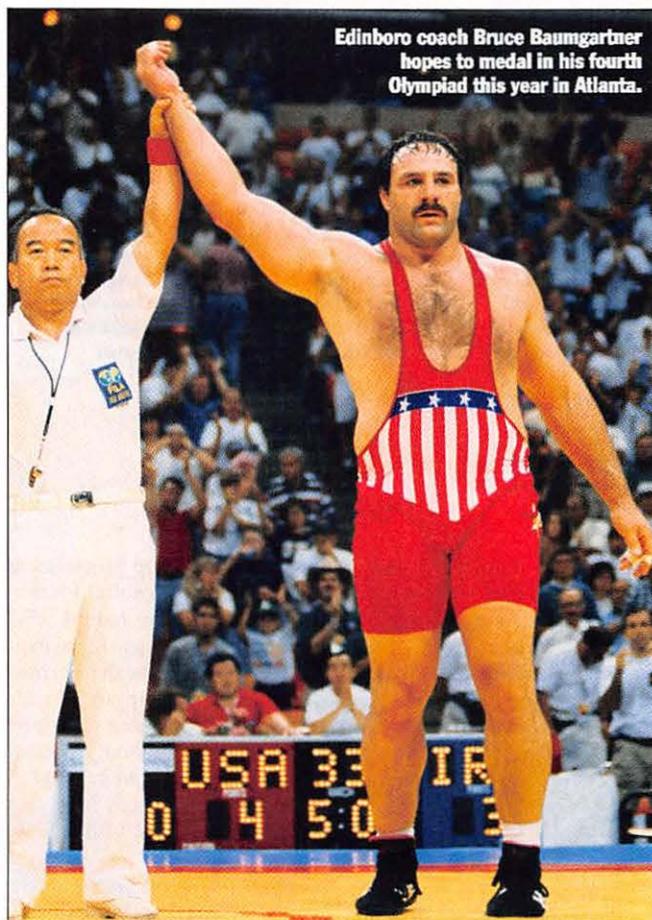
Three years later, the rest of the OVC can tell you how tough Nutt's decision turned out to be.

### THE END OF THE RAINBOWS?

■ Softball teams don't go from the Top 10 to oblivion without good reason, and Bob Coolen suddenly has more than his fair share. **Hawaii** will be missing so many players from last year's 45-21 team that Coach Coolen could fill out his lineup card with the back panels of milk cartons.

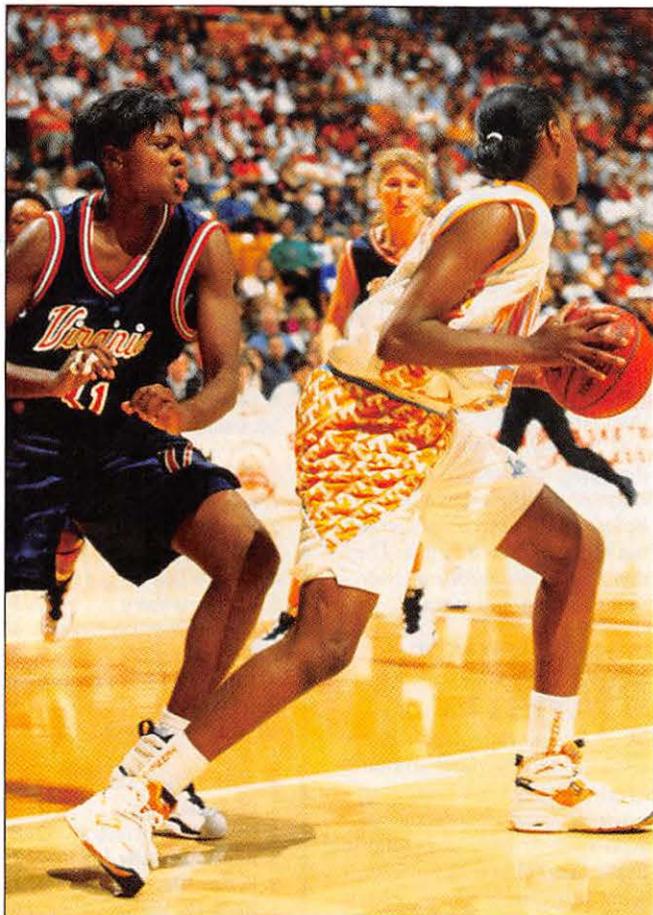
"We have quite a few new faces here," Coolen said. "We thought we'd have maybe one question spot—shortstop."

The Rainbow Wahine expected to lose their starting shortstop as well as their No. 2 pitcher—heck, anyone can see graduation coming. But Coolen



Edinboro coach Bruce Baumgartner hopes to medal in his fourth Olympiad this year in Atlanta.

USA WRESTLING/CAROL R. GIBSON



PHIL SEARS

Virginia's Wendy Palmer and Tennessee's Chamique Holdsclaw both hope Team USA's crystal ball was focused.

did not anticipate the attrition his team would endure. Hawaii will have to replace Brooke Wilkens, its first-team All-America pitcher who will redshirt under an Olympic waiver so she can play for the national team back home in Australia. Wilkens' catcher, Natalie Wood, also returned down under to try out for Australia's Olympic squad. Both players should return in the fall of '96 but will leave the Rainbows battery-less this spring.

The losses didn't end there. Cathy Turner, an all-region third baseman, did not return to school for her senior year. And the body count of departed starters reached six when Lanie Sueyasu, the starting second baseman and team captain, suffered a freakish season-ending injury—her patella split in half under pressure from ligaments while ducking to avoid a tag during a slow-pitch game over the summer; she refractured the kneecap again in fall practice.

## TOP OF THE HILL

■ She grew up with a ski lift in her backyard but refused to race. Never mind the easy ac-

cess to the Lower Roller Coaster run at the White Pass ski area near Yakima, Wash. Forget the family bloodlines. "I loved to ski, but I would not race. You couldn't bribe me with ice cream," she said.

Now, nearly a decade later, Ruth Mahre may be approaching her final race. She gave in as a 13 year old and was quickly bit by the bug that feasted on her entire family—her parents and their nine kids.

"I had some early success and got into it," said Mahre, now a senior hoping to help Nevada to a Top 10 finish in her final season. "When you do well, you keep doing it. That's the way we humans are."

Only very few humans do as well at anything as the Mahres have at skiing. Twin brothers Phil and Steve took gold and silver medals, respectively, in the slalom at the 1984 Winter Olympics at Sarajevo. Another brother, Paul, was a member of the U.S. ski team for four years. It's little wonder Ruth Mahre was hesitant, at least initially, to race—inevitable comparisons to her siblings were more daunting than any slope or

competition she'd encounter.

But skiing has served Mahre differently than it has her family, playing a role based more in support than sport. Skiing earned her a scholarship and now the 4.0 student is applying to physical therapy school. Skiing was her outlet as she watched her mother, Mary, fight cancer for three years before dying on July 4, 1993. And, in what likely will be her final winter of competitive skiing, it has become her primary source of fun.

"This is my last opportunity to go out and have some fun," Mahre said. "As much as I love skiing now, I reached a point where I knew it was not my life's dream. But I can still honestly say that I've gotten as much out of ski racing for my needs and satisfaction as anybody who's raced on the World Cup."

## YES, HE'S HEAVY... AND HE'S MY BROTHER

■ Combinations are a staple of wrestling lingo, though the current Oregon State team will surely put a new twist on the concept.

A quick glance of the Beavers' roster reveals an unofficial school-record four brother combinations distributed throughout the spectrum of weight classes. Senior Les Gutches, the defending national champion at 177 pounds, welcomes Jason, a redshirt freshman at 158, to Corvallis. True freshman Isaac Wood (150), winner of five junior national titles, joins his brother Oscar (142), another redshirt freshman. And Jake Whisehunt, a two-time JUCO runner-up at 126, and Josh (134) both transferred in from Clackamas (Ore.) Community College.

The only non-native Oregonians are Terry and Troy Steiner, a pair of twin assistant coaches who both won national titles at Iowa. **CS**

—DAVID SEIGERMAN

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON RANKINGS

### ■ Men's Tennis

1. Stanford . . . . . (10) 100
2. UCLA . . . . . 89
3. Georgia . . . . . 79
4. Mississippi . . . . . 59
5. Pepperdine . . . . . 55
6. TCU . . . . . 43
7. LSU . . . . . 37
8. USC . . . . . 32
9. Mississippi State . . . . . 23
10. South Alabama . . . . . 18

### ■ Women's Tennis

1. FLORIDA . . . . . (9) 99
2. Stanford . . . . . 87
3. Texas . . . . . (1) 83
4. Duke . . . . . 58
5. Georgia . . . . . 53
6. Cal. . . . . 48
7. Wake Forest . . . . . 43
8. UCLA . . . . . 34
9. Arizona . . . . . 24
10. USC . . . . . 21

All preseason rankings are compiled by COLLEGE SPORTS and reflect coaches' ratings. A first-place vote receives 10 points, second-place gets nine, etc. Total points are tabulated in the far righthand column. First-place votes are shown in parentheses.

## EASY AS 1-2-3

Ranked second and third in the preseason, FLORIDA'S Jill Craybas and Dawn Butth wouldn't appear to have many opponents to worry about. "They can compete with any No. 1 and 2 in the country," Florida coach Andy Brandi said.

But the only two returning All Americas from the Gators' 1995 national runner-up squad had problems this fall against a No. 3 singles player—a fellow Gator, no less. Florida junior Divya Merchant, ranked 15th in the preseason, beat Craybas in a tournament in Tampa and Butth in the consolation final of the All-American Tournament, which Craybas won.

"Everyone likes to compete with each other," Brandi said. "It helps everybody when they're pushed day in and day out."

Facing some of the country's best competition without leaving its own practice facility has made Florida a considerable favorite to avenge last year's loss to Texas. As good as the Gators' singles lineup is, they're even deeper in doubles. Butth spent most of the fall teaming primarily with freshman Stephanie Nickitas. Nickitas, who also paired with sophomore Bonnie Bleecker, did not lose a doubles match during the fall.—D.S.

## The Tell-It-Like-It-Is Bowl

■ Ross Fortier is a no-nonsense guy with a no-nonsense outlook. So, when it came time to name the bowl game that Fortier founded, there was only one choice. "We couldn't call it the Rose Bowl," Fortier said.

Instead, the Division II football all-star game is called the Snow Bowl—after all, on Jan. 13 in Fargo, N.D., there are no roses, no peaches and nary a fiesta to be found. "Two years ago [the first year of the Snow Bowl], it was 20 degrees below zero," Fortier said. "Last year, it was about 20 above. That's pretty

players chosen to compete in the 1996 Snow Bowl. "It makes me excited and a little nervous, but I'm happy I can go and show [the scouts] that I can play and that I'm durable."

This year's group of players had some sense of warmth in knowing that almost 20 Snow Bowl alumni have made it to the NFL. "I was watching the Buffalo-San Francisco game [in December] and, doggone it, on a play at the goal line, Darrick Holmes [Portland State (Ore.) and Snow Bowl II alumnus] fumbles the ball and Lee

ered a glutton for punishment—or one very savvy batter. Last year, Johnson led the nation in being hit by pitches, with 26 free passes to first in slightly more than 100 at-bats. "Strange thing was there were only about two that really hurt him," coach Mike Lane said. "He's down the line before the other coach can get out of the dugout to argue. They don't pitch him inside much anymore, let's put it that way."

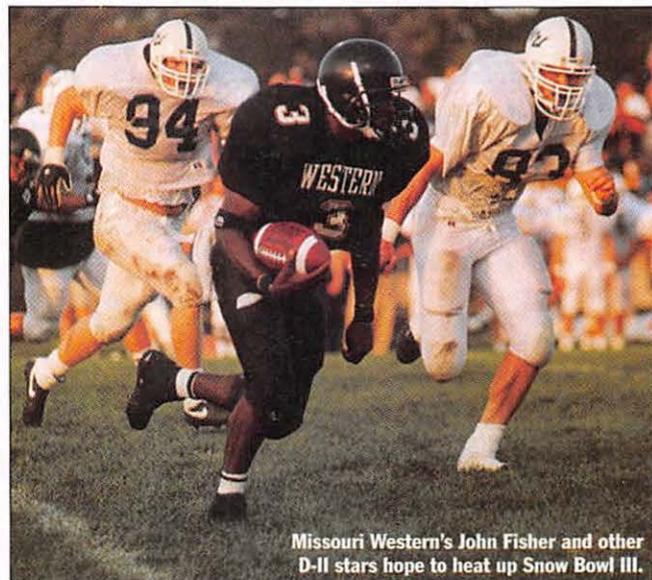
### THE WORST KIND OF STATISTIC

■ All-America linebackers with 3.3 G.P.A.s and so many bright days ahead aren't supposed to wind up as a statistic. And even if they did, Angelo State (Texas) star Greg Stokes wouldn't. Because, as coach Jerry Vandergriff said, "He was the heart and soul of this team. Not a prima donna but someone who was liked by everyone."

Stokes, a Harlan Hill finalist and the Rams' second all-time tackler with 493, did wind up as a statistic. Driving along U.S. Highway 83, he was believed to be on his way to see his girlfriend in Austin. The three-hour trip was barely a half-hour old when, at 5:30 a.m. on Nov. 5, Stokes was killed when he lost control of his 1986 Jeep Grand Cherokee, veered onto the rumble strip and flipped across 100 yards of rural highway.

The police report offers no real answers, just the causes: Speed, fatigue and a blood alcohol level of .23. In the days since, some have looked back on Stokes' last game on Nov. 4 when he was beat on a play that set up the game-winning score and gave No. 16 East Texas an upset victory. "Certainly we had many opportunities to minimize that one play. It only sticks out now because of the tragedy," Vandergriff said. "Losing a game is a disappointment. This is just an outright tragedy." **CS**

—DAVID SCOTT



Missouri Western's John Fisher and other D-II stars hope to heat up Snow Bowl III.

JACK WHELAN/MISSOURI WESTERN

nice around here for January."

The snow and cold don't affect the game in any way (it's played inside the 18,000-seat Fargo Dome) and they don't affect the turnout by the professional scouts (50 were registered last year). "It's a great opportunity to play with other players from around the nation," said running back John Fisher of Missouri Western and one of 80

Woodall [West Chester (Pa.) and Snow Bowl I] picks it up and runs 96 yards for the score," said Fortier. "I couldn't believe it."

Proceeds from the game benefit the 12 Shriners Hospitals throughout the nation.

### OH ME, OH MY, OMAR

■ North Alabama centerfielder Omar Johnson could be consid-

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON RANKINGS

### BASEBALL

1. Florida Southern (10) 100
2. Kennesaw State (Ga.) . . . . 65
3. Valdosta State (Ga.) . . . . 60
4. Central Missouri State . . . 48
5. North Florida . . . . . 40
6. Delta State (Miss.) . . . . 35
7. UC Riverside . . . . . 33
8. North Alabama . . . . . 31
9. Georgia College . . . . . 26
10. Columbus (Ga.) . . . . . 23

### MEN'S TENNIS

1. Lander (S.C.) . . . . . (10) 100
2. North Florida . . . . . 90
3. Rollins (Fla.) . . . . . 80
4. Georgia College . . . . . 59
5. SC-Spartanburg . . . . . 50
6. Abilene Christian (Texas) . 40
7. Bloomsburg (Pa.) . . . . . 33
8. Barry (Fla.) . . . . . 28
9. UC Davis . . . . . 26
10. Northwood (Mich.) . . . . 17

### WOMEN'S TENNIS

1. CS-Bakersfield . . . . . (7) 96
2. Grand Canyon (Ariz.) . (2) 89
3. Armstrong State (Ga.) . . . 78
4. Rollins (Fla.) . . . . . (1) 73
5. North Florida . . . . . 54
6. Georgia College . . . . . 37
- 7t. Abilene Christian (Texas) 34
- 7t. Denver . . . . . 34
9. UC Davis . . . . . 19
10. Presbyterian (S.C.) . . . . 18

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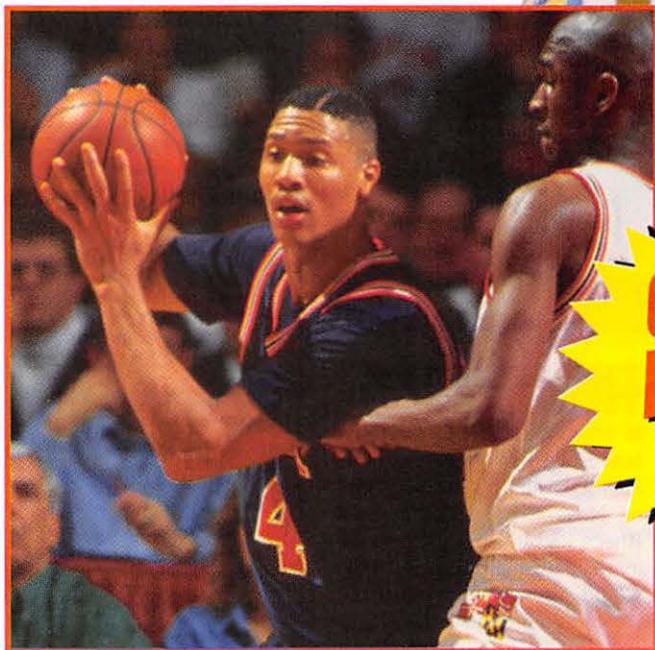
### VIEW FROM THE TOP

Defending national champion Florida Southern's head coach Chuck Anderson is blunt when he assesses his baseball team's potential to repeat. "I can't say for sure that we'll repeat. The ingredients are there, provided I don't mess it up." His peers don't think he could mess it up as shown by the Moccasins' unanimous pick as No. 1 in the CS preseason coaches' poll. The choice speaks volumes about the respect Anderson and his team commands, especially after losing last year's D-II Player of the Year, pitcher Brett Tomko, a first-round draft pick of the Cincinnati Reds. Ready to fill Tomko's shoes is preseason All America Danny Green, who went 14-2 last year.—D. Scott

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## What a Long, Strange Trip It Was

■ Pucks traveling toward faces at warp speed, punishing checks and the butt ends of sticks would have been a pleasant experience for the **Rochester Institute of Technology (N.Y.)** hockey team after enduring a different kind of hat trick earlier this season. In the midst of a road trip to Colorado, members of the Tigers drove through a series of grass fires on Pike's Peak, narrowly avoided a head-on collision and watched as a burglar attempted to rob a fast food restaurant.

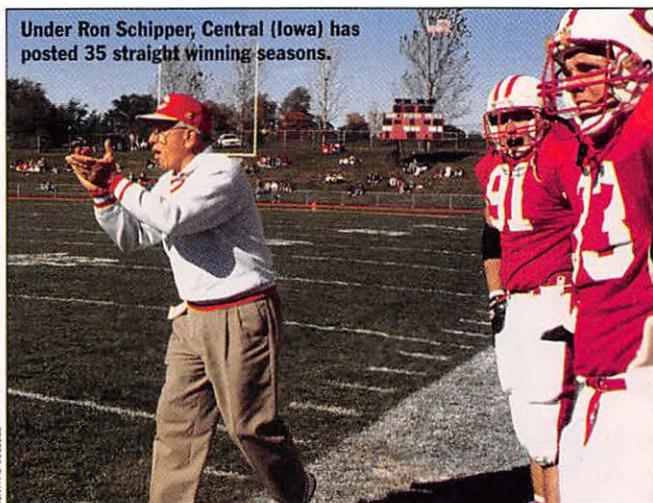
As the van carrying three players, the trainer and assistant sports information director Jay C. Whipple was returning from a sightseeing tour of Pike's Peak, several grass fires on the side of the road severely limited visibility. Shortly after emerging from the smoke screen, a driverless Chevy Citation came careening towards the van, which was being driven by senior Randy Cheynowski. The Citation had just hit a truck in front of the van, but Cheynowski slammed on the brakes, avoiding the car, which wound up in the median. "When we got through the fire, I thought we were in the clear, but that was just the start of our adventure," said junior defenseman Tom Post, who was in the van.

The group beat Air Force 1-0 that afternoon—Cheynowski had the assist on the game-winning goal—to complete a two-game sweep and prepared to return to Rochester, armed with a good story to tell at the dining commons. The team stopped for a bite at a McDonald's just outside of Denver when a gun-wielding customer at the drive-thru window passed along a note demanding money. A frenzied employee blurted out the news to the entire restaurant

as an alert manager phoned the police. The driver, apparently angered by the delay in his order, drove off. "The most amazing part of the whole thing was that as this was all going on, the girl at the register is counting

record this past season, Schipper has now guided the Flying Dutchmen to 35 straight winning seasons, the longest active streak at any level—Nebraska has had 34 straight plus-.500 campaigns. "I'm proud of [the streak and wins], but I'm probably more proud of the young men that have gone through this program," Schipper said. "It's just the simple fact of knowing that you have made some impact on their lives."

Under Ron Schipper, Central (Iowa) has posted 35 straight winning seasons.



back my change to me," Whipple said. "We kind of just ate quickly and got out of there."

### A FINE SKIPPER INDEED

■ Ron Schipper (pronounced Skipper) has a little running joke with Grambling's Eddie Robinson. "Whenever I see Eddie, I'll always ask when he's going to quit coaching," said Schipper, the head coach at **Central (Iowa)**. "Eddie always says, 'What am I going to do if I quit?' I'm the same way. I'm not a very good sitter."

But the 67-year-old Schipper is a very good winner as illustrated by his 280-64-3 career mark. He is third in wins among active NCAA coaches at any level, behind Robinson and John Gagliardi of St. John's (Minn.).

Also, with Central's 10-1

### THE JUG'S THE THING

■ When **Ithaca (N.Y.)** and **Cortland State (N.Y.)** renewed their intense rivalry for the 54th time on Nov. 4, the folks at host Ithaca had to do a little quick math. How, they wondered, would they fit an overflow crowd of more than 10,000 into Jim Butterfield Stadium, which seats 5,000.

"It was a little crowded," assistant athletic director Kristen Ford said. The final tally counted 12,511 fans in the bleachers and six-deep on the track surrounding the field.

Ithaca upset Cortland, 35-19, and proudly carried the 37-year-old ceramic symbol of victory, the "Cortaca Jug," off the field. That is, after the field cleared. **CS**

—DAVID SCOTT

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON RANKINGS

### ■ BASEBALL

1. UW-Oshkosh . . . . . (5) 91
2. La Verne (Calif.) . . . . . (4) 86
3. Methodist (N.C.) . . . . . (1) 83
4. William Paterson (N.J.) . . . . . 46
5. Carthage (Ohio) . . . . . 41
6. Montclair State (N.J.) . . . . . 33
7. Southern Maine . . . . . 24
- 8t. Marietta (Ga.) . . . . . 23
- 8t. North Carolina Wesleyan . . . . . 23
10. Cal Lutheran . . . . . 21

### ■ WOMEN'S TENNIS

1. **KENYON** . . . . . (10) 100
2. UC San Diego . . . . . 85
3. Trinity (Texas) . . . . . 73
4. Washington & Lee (Va.) . . . . . 62
- 5t. Amherst (Mass.) . . . . . 48
- 5t. Emory (Ga.) . . . . . 48
7. Claremont-Mudd (Calif.) . . . . . 46
8. Gustavus Adolphus (Minn.) . . . . . 29
9. Williams (Mass.) . . . . . 19
10. Luther (Iowa) . . . . . 17

### ■ MEN'S TENNIS

1. UC Santa Cruz . . . . . (9) 97
2. Washington (Md.) . . . . . 80
3. Gustavus Adolphus (Minn.) . . . . . 60
4. Kalamazoo (Mich.) . . . . . 56
5. Emory (Ga.) . . . . . (1) 53
6. Trinity (Texas) . . . . . 52
7. Redlands (Calif.) . . . . . 39
8. Williams (Mass.) . . . . . 33
9. Claremont-Mudd (Calif.) . . . . . 24
10. DePauw (Ind.) . . . . . 18

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### BULLISH ON REPEATING

The defending national champion **Kenyon Ladies tennis team** will be heading to Wisconsin in April for the regionals and head coach Paul Wardlaw is looking for a little Zen motivation on the way. "I'm trying to hook up with [Chicago Bulls coach] Phil Jackson. I hope he'll be able to talk to the team for 10 or 15 minutes," Wardlaw said.

Kenyon will try to become the first Division III team to repeat in the 14 years of championship play, and Wardlaw thinks a little inspiration from the coach who led **Da Bulls** to three straight championships could help **Da Ladies**.

"I think my assistant and I are more excited about possibly meeting Phil than the kids are," Wardlaw said.—D. Scott

## More Than Just a Passing Fancy

■ Guys who play fullback in run-and-shoot offenses are usually overlooked. Just ask Jason Baldwin of **Huron College (S.D.)**. The Tribe's bruiser is talked about as much as car-buretors at the beauty parlor.

Instead, it's junior quarterback

318 second-half yards to his 308 yard first-half performance.

It was a second half that included a conversion by Fellows on third-and-49 from his own 12-yard line, a result of three unsportsmanlike calls. Fellows found a receiver for an 88-yard touchdown pass. "I guess the defense just broke down," Fellows said. On the season, Fellows led Huron's No. 1-rated offense (Black Hills was No. 2) with 330 completions in 571 attempts for 4,050 yards and 43 touchdowns. "Game days are sort of like an off-day for me because I throw about 250 balls a day in practice," Fellows said.

### SURF'S UP, DUDE

■ The difficulties in splitting coaching responsibilities between a men's and women's team are something that many coaches around the country have to deal with. When both teams are Top 10-caliber, the balancing act becomes even more precarious. So **BYU-Hawaii** men's and women's tennis coach Dave Porter seems to have found the perfect solution. "When things get tough, we go surfing," Porter said.

### CRYSTAL CLEAR

■ She could have been playing for the high-profile, nationally ranked Louisiana Tech basketball team. Probably would have gotten some serious PT, too. But 5-foot-10 Crystal Robinson didn't need to see her name in bright lights to confirm she was a great basketball player.

"I went to Tech for all the wrong reasons. Mostly, I think I went because my father wanted me to," Robinson said. But now Robinson's father is one of

**Southeastern Oklahoma's** biggest fans as his daughter has etched her name at the top of almost every Lady Savages' all-time record, including career points and rebounds.

After just one semester at Tech, Robinson informed coach Leon Barmore that she would be leaving. "I don't know how many meetings we had with myself and my parents and the coaches. There was some anger there but I knew I had to go," said Robinson, who entered her senior year averaging 28 points and 10 rebounds.

"One of the major differences is that here at Southeastern I seem like more of a student. I can do other things," Robinson said. "After basketball season is over, I'm going to try and play tennis. I never could have done that at Tech. I just know that everything I could have accomplished at Louisiana Tech, I've accomplished here. Division I is the big thing with high school athletes, but I think there's a misconception about the smaller schools."

Durant, where Southeastern is located, is in the same sector of the Rand McNally map as Robinson's hometown of Atoka, and the chance to play just an outlet pass from home is something she cherishes. "This part of the state has never had any recognition for basketball. I'm trying to help put them on the map." Mission accomplished.

Last year, Southeastern fell one point shy of a national championship, losing to in-state rival **Southern Nazarene**. In five postseason games, Robinson averaged 10.6 rebounds and a tournament-record 35.4 points.

"I don't worry about the numbers," said Robinson, a health and physical education major. "A lot of people think it's a step down to play in the NAIA, but there're some very good players here." Perhaps none better than Crystal Robinson. **CS**

—DAVID SCOTT

## COLLEGE SPORTS' PRESEASON RANKINGS

### ■ BASEBALL

1. Lewis-Clark St. (Idaho) (6) 91
2. Dallas Baptist (Texas) . (2) 79
3. Bellevue (Neb.) . . . . . (2) 64
4. Southeastern Oklahoma . . 63
5. Birmingham So. (Ala) . . . . 46
6. Cumberland (Tenn.) . . . . . 44
7. St. Mary's (Texas) . . . . . 36
8. Lubbock Christian (Texas). 33
9. OKLAHOMA CITY . . . . . 24
10. St. Francis (Ill.) . . . . . 22

### ■ MEN'S TENNIS

1. Aub.-Montgomery (Ala.) (6) 95
- 2t. Incarn. Word (Texas) . (1) 68
- 2t. Ouachita Baptist (Ark.) . . 68
4. Mobile (Ala.) . . . . . (3) 67
5. BYU-Hawaii . . . . . 51
6. West Florida . . . . . 49
7. Lynn (Fla.) . . . . . 40
8. Tyler (Texas) . . . . . 33
9. Flagler (Fla.) . . . . . 30
10. Oklahoma City . . . . . 27

### ■ WOMEN'S TENNIS

1. Lynn (Fla.) . . . . . (7) 97
2. Mobile (Ala.) . . . . . (2) 88
3. BYU-Hawaii . . . . . 79
4. Aub.-Montgomery (Ala.) (1) 74
5. Brenau (Ga.) . . . . . 62
6. Oklahoma City . . . . . 42
7. West Florida . . . . . 36
8. Birmingham So. (Ala.) . . . 24
9. Freed Hardemann (Tenn.) . 19
10. Shorter (Ga.) . . . . . 7

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## TENNIS, MATE?

It's beginning to look a lot like the Outback at Oklahoma City, but with the men's and women's tennis teams ranked in the Top 10, it's unlikely either team will be found Down Under come May. Both the women's head coach, Tim Shanahan, and men's head coach, Colin Robertson, are from Australia. Between their two squads there are six Aussie players.

Shanahan had played for Robertson at OCU and then decided to stick around when the women's coach left a few years ago. Shanahan has Australian Leanne Melgaard playing at No. 2 singles for the women, and four of Robertson's top six players are from the land of koala bears and kangaroos.—D. Scott



SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA

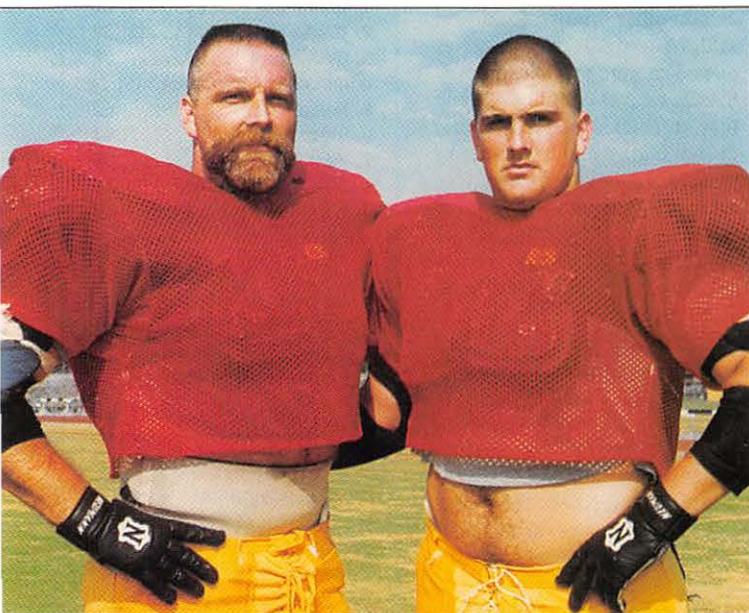
Crystal Robinson didn't need Division I to reach her goals.

Don Fellows who has people gabbing, especially after throwing for 636 yards on 49 of 76 attempts against **Black Hills State (S.D.)** earlier this year. "We started off slow that game," said Fellows, whose team was trailing 13-0 going into the second quarter. "But then we scored three touchdowns in the last five minutes of the half." Huron went on to win, 50-21, as Fellows added

## In Defense of The Family

■ This is more than just some male bonding thing. Sure, there is a certain rush that two men can get from converging with the force of a freight train on another guy carrying a football. But this goes beyond that. "It was weird tackling the guy with my dad," Adam Shaffer said. "But it was cool." Shaffer and his father, Jeff, played defense together for the 2-7 **Hartnell (Calif.)** Panthers. Jeff, 39, and Adam, 18, got to

California Water Company (with his size, they usually pay). Jeff, who never played organized football growing up, was spotted on the sideline by head coach Gary Collenborn while watching his son. "He came over and said, 'You look like you're in pretty good shape, but all you older guys just want to play quarterback,'" Jeff said. "I said that I wanted to play alongside my son on defense."



The father-son duo of Jeff and Adam Shaffer is grabbing headlines.

play some downs together, but nagging injuries hampered Jeff from playing as much as his son, who the elder Shaffer unabashedly called "one heck of a football player."

Lest anyone think that this was just a gimmick, Jeff, 6-foot-3, 265 pounds, has vowed to get into football shape for next year rather than just the sculpted weightlifting shape he played at last season. "I went in, with total honesty, just to play football," said Jeff, a bill collector for the

The result has elevated Jeff to cult status in and around Salinas and has even prompted some interest from Fox and ABC regarding a TV movie. "I can't even express what this has done for our relationship and the relationship of the whole family," Jeff said.

Adam's 17-year-old brother, Dan, plays in a local band, and Jeff hasn't ruled out teaming up with his other son. "I do play the drums a little bit," Jeff said.

## STREAKING TOWARD A RECORD

■ When the dust had finally settled at the 1946 Papoose Bowl in Oklahoma City, Bill Mace and his teammates walked off the field as a part of history. The loss that day by **Coffeyville (Kan.)** to Cameron put an end to the longest consecutive game winning streak in junior college football at 35. Mace, an All-America quarterback, recalls the disappointment of that loss but not much else. "To tell you the truth I didn't even know it was a record," said Mace, 70, who now lives in Overland Park, Kan.

The only reason he knows it now is because the **DuPage (Ill.)** Chaparrals have tied the Coffeyville streak and, with a win in their 1996 opener, coach Bob MacDougall's squad can break the 50-year-old record. MacDougall is the winningest active coach in the NJCAA with a record of 167-54, and his team has taken just three seasons to match the mark that took the Red Ravens parts of five seasons and seven years (because of World War II) to establish.

"Hell," Mace said, "records are made to be broken."

## TIE-ING ONE ON

■ **Madison Area Tech (Wis.)**, the defending NJCAA Division III national baseball champion, finished last year with a record of 41-12-1. And while ties in baseball do occur—usually because of darkness—this one has to be filed under "Time Expired." The Trojans were playing in the Minneapolis Metrodome in a game that was bumped up a few days to accommodate the women's basketball Final Four, which was in town that weekend. The game ran a bit long and the rental time on the Dome expired, leaving Madison Area with a most unusual tie. **CS**

—DAVID SCOTT

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3. Potomac (W. Va.)
4. Kirkwood (Iowa)
5. Brookdale (N.J.)

#### DIV. III

1. Madison Area Tech (Wis.)
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3. Gloucester (N.J.)
4. North Lake (Texas)
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### ■ MEN'S TENNIS

#### DIV. I

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5. Brunswick (Ga.)

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5. Temple (Texas)

### ■ WOMEN'S TENNIS

#### DIV. I

1. Tyler (Texas)
2. Broward (Fla.)
3. North Central (Texas)
4. Abraham Baldwin (Ga.)
5. McLennan (Texas)

#### DIV. II

1. Pima (Ariz.)
2. Collin County (Texas)
3. Sinclair (Ohio)
4. Wallace (Ala.)
5. Miami-Dade (Fla.)

## TITLETOWN

Middle Georgia's first title since 1982 certainly has had its rewards, but while the pressure of repeating could get to most coaches, Robert Sapp has a more upbeat outlook on things. "I'd rather be coming back as the national champion than as someone who didn't get out of state," said Sapp, whose Warriors finished 55-11 and won their first national crown of the 1990s. Middle Georgia has now won at least one national title in the last three decades ('79, '80 and '82).

The Warriors return a solid pitching nucleus and a talented infield and outfield. "The whole key for us will be improvement throughout the year. We just have to try and stay focused," Sapp said.—D. Scott

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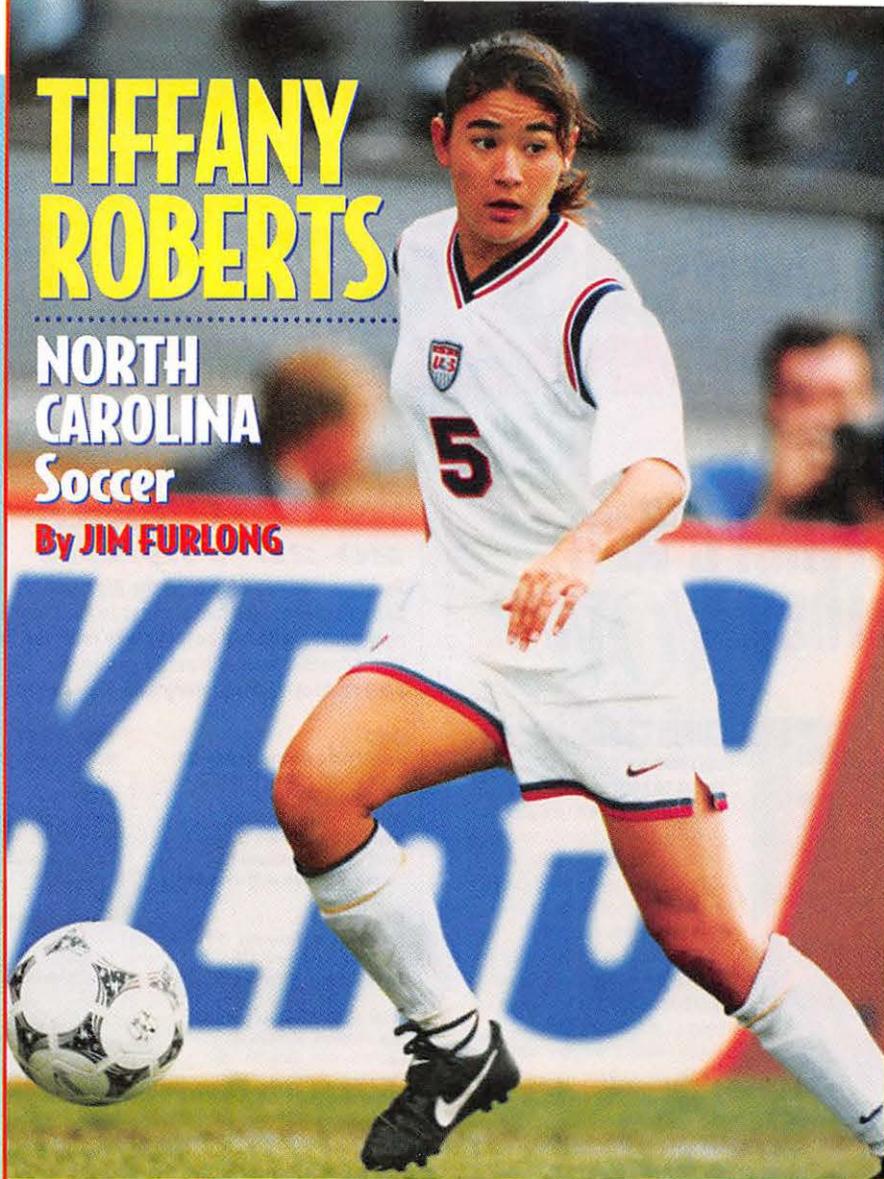
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# TIFFANY ROBERTS

NORTH CAROLINA  
Soccer

By JIM FURLONG



CHRIS COLE/ALLSPORT

For most high school kids, whatever anxiety surrounds leaving high school for college is compounded by the fear of being just another face in the crowd. North Carolina's Tiffany Roberts didn't have that problem. A member of the women's national team since her junior year in high school, Roberts had already found her place among the country's best soccer players.

Last summer, just after her senior year in high school, Roberts was the starting flank midfielder for the national team in the 1995 World Championships in Sweden. Roberts, the only high school player on the 1995 World Cup active roster, is perhaps the first athlete who dropped down a level of competition when she played in her first college game at North Carolina.

"It's overwhelming," said Roberts, who took correspondence courses to complete her final high school semester. "I am really not an average teenager. I had to move out when I was 17. . . but I don't regret missing [high school] senior activities because the World Cup was a dream come true. I think about it all the time. I still can't believe I played for the U.S. team."

Things figure to get even better for Roberts, who likely will complete a whirlwind year of almost non-stop activity this summer when she competes for the national team during the Olympics in Atlanta. International competition obviously is nothing new for Roberts, who already has scored as many goals (five) and played in more games for the U.S. (34) against international competition than she has for the Tar Heels (five goals, 26 games) against college foes.

Roberts, an 18-year-old California native, had a week off before moving from the World Cup spotlight to becoming an instant starter for nine-time defending national champion North Carolina. "I wasn't tired," she said. "It was a new thing and I was excited."

She helped the Tar Heels to a 25-0 record before they suffered a 1-0 loss to Notre Dame, the eventual champion, in the national semifinals in Chapel Hill, N.C. Tar Heels coach Anson Dorrance calls Roberts the best defensive midfielder he's coached during his 17 seasons at North Carolina, where his teams have won 13 national championships and built an overall 348-10-10 record.

"She would take out whomever was in her

zone," Dorrance said. "She is a remarkable defensive presence, not just one of the best in college but one of the best in the world."

The 5-foot-3, 115-pound Roberts is nicknamed "The Little Animal" because of her dogged pursuit of the ball during matches. "Pound for pound, she is the toughest player on the [national] team," USA coach Tony DiCiccio said. "She tracks the ball. If she doesn't get it first, she is back at it. No doubt, she has the quickest initial chase on the team. If you steal it from her, you don't have it. She will track you tenaciously, working until she gets it back."

"The best part of me, what God gave me, is a big heart," Roberts said. "The effort I put in took me to the top level and it's something that inspires me even in practice. I don't want to give up. I may not have the skills of some others, but what makes me better is I don't give up."

Big heart to be sure. When her heart rate was monitored during a competition for the national team, she registered 188 beats per minute—the highest for any player on the team. "She lives in aerobic denial," Dorrance said. "A cardiologist would tell you that [her heart rate] is physically impossible, but that is how hard she drives herself. . . . Most peo-

ple aren't capable of pushing so hard. She can push herself into that zone and live in that zone for 90 minutes, and that's tough. It's like asking a cheetah to run a marathon."

Roberts has been going full-tilt athletically for years. She was the 1994 California prep soccer Player of the Year, a three-time *Parade* magazine All-America selection and also a prep track standout in the 400 and 800 meters and the long jump.

Besides her array of physical skills, Roberts brings certain intangible assets to her teams. "She is the sort of kid that lights up a practice and is so good for chemistry," Dorrance said. "She is just an incredibly happy-go-lucky individual. Despite all her achievements as a young athlete, she doesn't see herself as being better than anyone else. She wears her fame gracefully."

The Olympics give Roberts yet another chance to go for the gold—an unfulfilled goal to date, since her World Cup team, like the Heels, lost in the semifinals.

"Playing for the U.S. gives you more of an incentive," Roberts said. "Hearing the national anthem now means a whole lot more to me. To be representing your country is a big thing. . . . When you play for your country, you want to be the best in the world." **CS**

# odds & ENDINGS



**Kelvin Sampson, Oklahoma**

## Where Are They NOW?



### CHRIS CORCHIANI

**COLLEGE:** North Carolina State  
**CLAIM TO FAME:** Led the nation in assists in 1991 with 9.6 per game. Holds ACC records for assists per game during a season (9.6) and for a career (8.4). Owns the school record for career assists (1,038) and steals (328). Left N.C. State as the NCAA's all-time career assists leader. One of only two college players ever to collect 1,000 assists (Duke's Bobby Hurley is the other with 1,079). Played three years in the NBA, including stints with the Orlando Magic, Washington Bullets and Boston Celtics.  
**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Plays professional basketball in Lever Kusen, Germany.

From 1988-'91, the potent "Fire and Ice" combination of Chris Corchiani and Rodney Monroe rewrote the North Carolina State record books and led the Wolfpack to an 84-40 record and three NCAA Tournament appearances. Monroe is still the school's all-time leading scorer with 2,551 points while Corchiani holds the season and career records for both assists and steals. "Rodney and I came in as freshmen and we grew together," Corchiani said. "We built a chemistry."

That bond is rekindled each summer in Raleigh when Corchiani and Monroe run the "Fire and Ice" basketball camp, where Corchiani prides himself on his hands-on approach. "At some camps run by professional athletes, they're not there all the time," Corchiani said, "but Rodney and I are always there."

During the remainder of the year, Corchiani and Monroe play pro basketball overseas. Monroe plays for a team in the Philippines and Corchiani is in his first year with Bayer Lever Kusen in the German League.

"I enjoy playing overseas because I didn't see much time in the NBA," Corchiani said. "The fans here are aggressive and into the games. . . . When you're in a good situation, it makes [playing] a lot of fun."—Marc Oliver

## FACTS & FIGURES 20-20 VISION

*Pssst . . . the secret is out—the Big Eight has a few pretty good basketball teams. Thanks to a pair of coaches who had success in their first year in the league, the Big Eight leads all Division I conferences with five coaches who recorded consecutive 20-win seasons. Last season, 71 Division I coaches won at least 20 games. But here are the 37 coaches who have reached the magic plateau back-to-back, along with their current streak of 20-win seasons in parentheses:*

### ACC

Dean Smith, North Carolina (25)  
 Dave Odom, Wake Forest (3)

### A-10

John Calipari, UMass (5)  
 Scott Edgar, Duquesne (2)  
 (achieved while at Murray St.)

### BIG EAST

Jim Boeheim, Syracuse (13)  
 Jim Calhoun, UConn (2)  
 Steve Lappas, Villanova (2)

### BIG EIGHT

Roy Williams, Kansas (6)  
 Eddie Sutton, Okla. St. (5)  
 Tim Floyd, Iowa St. (3)\*  
 Kelvin Sampson, Oklahoma (2)\*  
 Norm Stewart, Missouri (2)

### BIG SKY

Ron Abegglen, Weber St. (3)

### BIG TEN

Dick Bennett, Wisconsin (2)  
 (achieved while at UW-Green Bay)  
 Gene Keady, Purdue (2)

### BIG WEST

Neil McCarthy, New Mexico St. (7)

### C-USA

Bob Huggins, Cincinnati (4)  
 Mike Deane, Marquette (2)\*  
 Charlie Spoonhour, St. Louis (2)

### IVY

Fran Dunphy, Penn (3)

### MAAC

John Bellein, Canisius (2)

### MAC

Larry Hunter, Ohio U. (2)

### MID-CONTINENT

Homer Drew, Valparaiso (2)

### MEAC

Ron "Fang" Mitchell, Coppin St. (2)

### MISSOURI VALLEY

Rich Herrin, Southern Illinois (4)  
 Jim Molinari, Bradley (2)

### NORTH ATLANTIC

Bill Herrion, Drexel (3)

### PAC-10

Lute Olson, Arizona (8)  
 Jim Harrick, UCLA (7)

### SEC

Nolan Richardson, Arkansas (8)  
 Rick Pitino, Kentucky (5)  
 David Hobbs, Alabama (2)  
 Tubby Smith, Georgia (2)  
 (achieved while at Tulsa)

### SWC

Tom Penders, Texas (2)

### TAAC

John Kresse, Coll. of Charleston (2)

### WEST COAST

Dan Fitzgerald, Gonzaga (2)

### WAC

Roger Reid, BYU (6)

\* '94-'95 was the first year with the team listed.

## THE LAST WORD

with DUKE's MIKE KRZYZEWSKI

*As much as Mike Krzyzewski missed being an active part of Duke basketball last season, his team missed him more. After a 9-3 start in 1994-'95, the Blue Devils lost 15 of their 19 games once Coach K was sidelined with back problems for the rest of the season.*

*With Krzyzewski's return this season, Duke has reclaimed its spot among the nation's best. Here, he discusses what his return means to Duke as the NCAA Tournament approaches.*

For the most part, we want to forget last year. You need to revisit certain things individually, especially [negative things] because those are things the kids will have to get over. For example, Wojto [guard Steve Wojciechowski] didn't play. What did that do to him? What can we do to help in that

respect? As far as having T-shirts reading, "We're coming back with a vengeance," I'm not looking for that. We've never played that way. . . .

I think there are some things we need to rebuild—[such as our] confidence level. You don't go through last year record-wise and not have your confidence shaken. There were two extremes; the extreme that we were in for nine years in such a positive sense . . . to now have the other extreme—we finished in last place and won only two conference games. There has to be a little bit of a balance. I don't want to revisit too many negatives. We need to look to the future. **CS**



BOB PENNINGTON/SPORT

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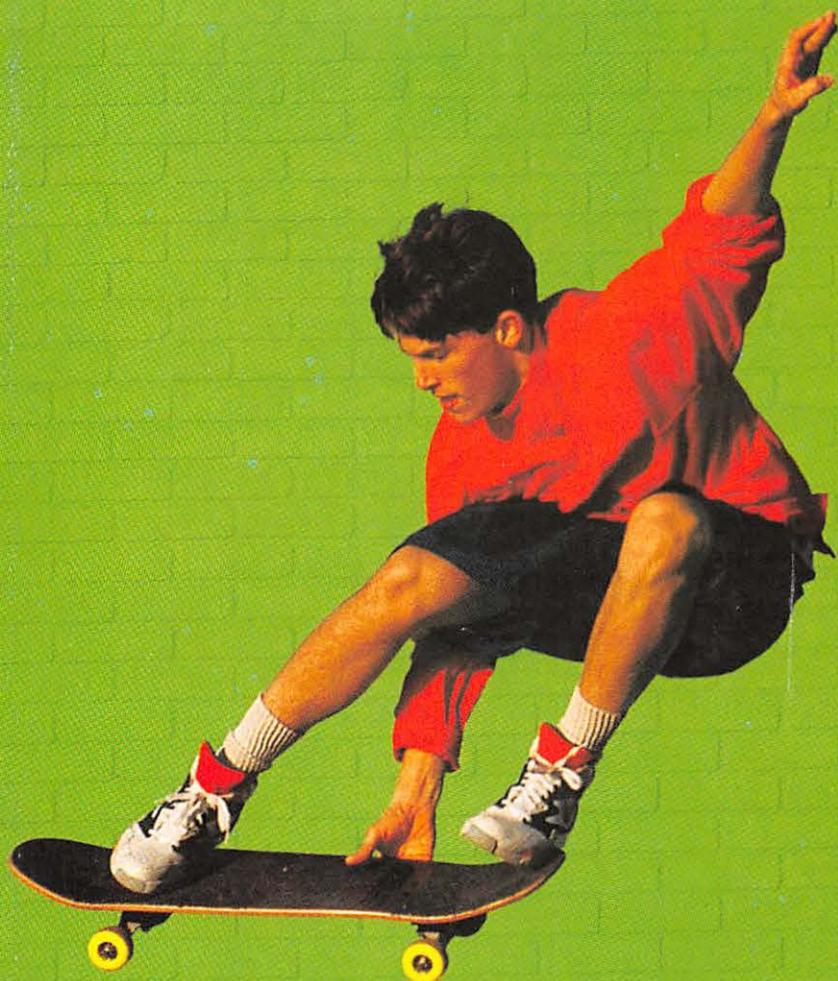


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